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**The Institutions of Literary Colonialism
George Eliot, Anthony Trollope, and the Cape Colony**

Da Silva, Sarah Janine

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**The Institutions of Literary Colonialism: George Eliot, Anthony
Trollope, and the Cape Colony.**

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Abstract

This thesis is an investigation into the formation of white belonging in South Africa, focalised through what I call the institutions of literary colonialism – the public library, the postal service, and the colonial press. I also use George Eliot and Anthony Trollope, both of whom had personal connections to South Africa, as case studies. Their interactions with the three institutions of literary colonialism allow me to situate their works within the colonial institutional setting of which they formed a part, and also facilitate an investigation into how the exercise of white power over the indigenous African population was aided by literary and cultural institutions. However, rather than tracing a history of white settlement in the Cape, this thesis argues that white belonging was founded on a sense of unsettlement and ambivalence, which was articulated through the institutions of literary colonialism. At the heart of this project is a tension between the Cape colonists' desire to imitate and emulate British literary practices, whilst at the same time begin to articulate a sense of 'colonial nationalism' through the development of white settler literary culture, institutions and forms of knowledge. I argue that this tension was the driving force behind the development of the Cape's literary culture. Whilst the remoteness and insularity of the Cape meant that its cultural institutions were dependant on imported metropolitan cultural norms and products, its distance from the metropole also enabled the development of a distinct and unique literary culture. I explore this entanglement of desires for colonial autonomy and for sustained connections to Britain by interrogating how literary culture was 'made' in the Cape Colony.

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Introduction

Home, loss and literature

The second issue of the *Cape Monthly Magazine*, a periodical published in the Cape Colony between 1857 and 1862, contains an article titled 'Amy of Eland Grove: A Heart Story'.¹ In it the narrator, an elderly man, reminisces about his first love. Amy was his neighbour, and they grew up together in idyllic surroundings, on farmland overlooking a lush and verdant valley, which was located in a mountainous area of the Cape known as Bainskloof.² Describing their childhood activities, the narrator states that he and Amy were schooled by his mother, who used his father's well-stocked library to acquaint them with 'the works of the great English poets, from Chaucer to Wordsworth'. These they studied with 'eager and unbounded pleasure' ('Amy', p.93). In their leisure time, the children would walk down to the sea shore and recite their favourite poems to each other whilst watching the 'great ocean' before them ('Amy', p.94). The juxtaposition of two African-born English children, sitting on an African beach, reciting the works of English poets who were strongly associated with the English landscape is striking. The sea represents a physical barrier, preventing the children from merging their imaginary visions of England with a real experience of it. This scene suggests that English settler belonging in South Africa was mediated by a loss of home, which is expressed through an appreciation for English literature, as well as English cultural norms and practices.

Although the children were fond of Wordsworth and Shakespeare, the narrator relates that he regretted introducing Amy to the 'weirdlike wildness' of Coleridge's 'Christabel' and 'The Rime of the Ancient Mariner' ('Amy', p.94). Upon reading these, Amy went into a 'swoon', re-enacting

¹ 'Amy of Eland Grove: A Heart Story', *Cape Monthly Magazine*, February 1857, pp. 91 - 97 (p. 233).

² The road through this mountain pass was designed and constructed by Andrew Geddes Bain, who gives his name to the area. (Jose Burman, 'Bain, Andrew Geddes', in *Dictionary of South African Biography*, ed. by W. J. de Kock, 5 vols (Pretoria: Nasional Boekhandel Bpk. for National Council for Social Research, 1968 - 1987) 1, pp. 35 - 39.

Christabel's weakness after spending the night with Geraldine.³ This creates a sense of foreboding and predetermined tragedy, which is realised later in the narrative. The couple become engaged, and a week before their wedding, they take their horses for a race, galloping to where 'the heavens touch the earth' (p.95). Amy's horse becomes restless, and bolts off a cliff with Amy still on its back (p.96). Thereafter, the narrator becomes a civil servant and moves from Eland Grove to the town, because he finds that 'a shadow has fallen on the face of nature' since Amy's death:

The murmuring of the ocean, the fall of waters, the music of birds have now a sombering influence on my spirit, and stir within me the deep places of sadness and sorrow (p.96).

The reference to Wordsworth and Coleridge's poetry at the beginning of the story is a premonition of the narrator's future loss, not only of Amy, but also of his idyllic colonial home at the coast, and ultimately of his original 'homeland', England. Steven Gill has argued that English Romantic poetry records 'the common human sense of loss, or of the precariousness of our sense of stability and identity'.⁴ For readers in the Cape Colony, these feelings of loss and instability would have been intensified by their distance from England and the dangers of their new life in South Africa. The instability of settler life in the Cape Colony was twofold. Physical danger in an unknown landscape and from unknown indigenous people was coupled with spiritual and emotional hazards, as the colonists strove to negotiate their sense of identity and belonging in an unfamiliar land. As this thesis will demonstrate, these feelings of belonging and attachment were unstable and in a constant state of flux. Literature's role in forging and consolidating a sense of settlement was both stabilising, providing a link to the cultural heritage of England, and destabilising, reminding settlers of their trans-continental displacement and of the disjunction between the content of their books and the setting in which they read them.

This thesis explores the establishment of English colonial belonging in South Africa, focalised through British and colonial literature, and what I have identified as the institutions of literary colonialism: the colonial press, the South African Public Library, and the colonial postal service. The

³ Samuel Taylor Coleridge, 'Christabel', in *Samuel Taylor Coleridge: Selected Poems*, ed. by Richard Holmes, (London: Penguin, [1816] 1996), pp. 102 - 120.

⁴ Stephen Gill, *Wordsworth and the Victorians*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998), p. 50.

colonial press encouraged the development of a local English literary intelligentsia, and emphasised the importance of colonial knowledge and culture. The South African Public Library was complicit in this moulding of local knowledge structures because it was a symbol of the civilising work that can be enacted through books and their diffusion through the colony. Finally the colonial postal service ensured the movement of books and literary products through the colony and between the colony and the British Empire. This trifecta of white cultural institutions of settlement interacted to form a system of literary production, dissemination and consumption in the Cape. Studying them together provides a clear sense, not only of how literature functions, in the sense of understanding the processes of production and consumption in a new colonial community; but also the role that literature played in establishing the colony.

The starting point for this project is a letter written by Herbert (Bertie) Lewes, George Eliot's stepson, from Cape Town in October 1866. He had been sent to South Africa to join his brother Thornton (Thornie) in a farming venture in Natal. During his stopover in Cape Town, Bertie visited the South African Public Library where he saw Eliot's books on the shelves, along with the *Fortnightly Review*, which was edited by his father George Henry Lewes.⁵ Bertie's search for these remnants of family and home in a colonial library reiterates my claim that new beginnings in South Africa were experienced as a loss of home, and this rupture was in some way reconciled by having access to the literature and cultural productions of England. This becomes clear in a later letter from Bertie to his father, written in 1871, in which he thanks him for the 'Box of Books' that he had been sent, but wishes that 'Mutter's last two poems' had been included in the delivery.⁶ One wonders about the selection of books that Lewes chose to send his son, then living with his wife in poverty-stricken conditions in rural Natal (*Eliot Letters*, 9, p.16). However, it is clear what was absent – books that Bertie had a personal interest in, which provided a link to his family and home during a time of persistent and unrelenting hardship.

⁵ In Nancy Henry, *George Eliot and the British Empire*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), p. 1.

⁶ Herbert Lewes to George Henry Lewes, in *The George Eliot Letters*, ed. by Gordon Sherman Haight, 9 vols (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1978), IX, p. 16.

The presence of English books and periodicals in a colonial library and in colonial fiction introduces my two focus authors, George Eliot and Anthony Trollope. They have been selected as case studies because of their fame as realist writers in Britain.⁷ Both authors enjoyed, and were aware of, their wide readership across the world. John Cross's Preface to *George Eliot's Life as Related in her Letters and Journals* notes her strong market presence amongst readers at home and abroad:

That "Greater Britain" (Canada and Australia), which to-day forms so large a reading public, was then scarcely more than a geographical expression, with less than half a million of inhabitants, all told, where at present there are eight millions; and in the United States, where more copies of George Eliot's books are now sold than in any other quarter of the world, the population then numbered less than ten millions where to-day it is fifty-five millions. Including Great Britain, these English-speaking races have increased from thirty millions in 1820 to one hundred millions in 1884; and with the corresponding increase in education we can form some conception how a popular English writer's fame has widened its circle.⁸

Trollope also repeatedly registers the 'thirty million' readers that he had in North America, as well as 'the readers who are rising by millions in the British colonies'.⁹ Eliot and Trollope were also both aware of their moral and didactic responsibilities as authors. Eliot's emphasis on literature's ability to extend feelings of 'sympathy' and moral empathy amongst readers is repeated in Trollope's claim that his readers are his 'pupils' who recognise him as their 'teacher' (*North America*, p.415).¹⁰ This thesis situates both authors' impulses to 'civilise' their readers alongside the Cape colonists' desires to civilise the inhabitants of Cape Town, and asks how their literature was read and interpreted in a colonial context. Focusing on these two authors enables me to reassess their works by placing them within the colonial institutional setting of which they formed a part. It also enables me to place South African literary history within a wider colonial and imperial context, by assessing how Eliot and Trollope's works were received in the Cape and what kind of influence they had on the colonists.

⁷ For more on Eliot's status as a nineteenth-century 'cultural icon', see Chapter 8 of Rosemarie Bodenheimer, *The Real Life of Mary Ann Evans: George Eliot, Her Letters and Fiction*, (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1994). For more on Trollope's fame, see John N. Hall, *Trollope: A Biography*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), p. 150.

⁸ John Walter Cross and George Eliot, *George Eliot's Life as Related in Her Letters and Journals. Arranged and Edited by Her Husband, J. W. Cross*, (Edinburgh: William Blackwood and Sons, 1885), pp. 4 - 5. For more on Eliot's ambivalent attitude toward her fame, see Sarah Wah, 'The Most Churlish of Celebrities': George Eliot, John Cross and the Question of High Status', *Journal of Victorian Culture*, 15. 3 (2010), pp. 370 - 387.

⁹ Anthony Trollope, *North America*, 2 vols (London: Chapman and Hall, 1862), II, p. 415. See also Anthony Trollope, *An Autobiography*, 2 vols (Edinburgh; London: William Blackwood and Sons, 1883), II, p. 149.

¹⁰ George Eliot, 'The Natural History of German Life', *Westminster Review*, July 1856, pp. 51 - 79 (p. 110).

George Eliot and Anthony Trollope are also significant in this thesis because of their personal and authorial entanglements with white settler South African communities. Susan Meyer has examined Eliot's literary engagement with imperialism by examining two of her novels, *The Mill on the Floss* (1860) and *Daniel Deronda* (1876).¹¹ Meyer's analysis draws a parallel between the social marginalisation of nineteenth-century white women and people of other races, and she reveals how Eliot employs racial difference to represent 'social alienation' and the 'tension between self and society' in both novels (Meyer, p.27). Nancy Henry consolidates Meyer's argument by emphasising the importance of the biographical context to Eliot's fiction. Eliot sent two of her stepsons to South Africa in the 1860's, and from then on was 'never without letters from or about the empire' (Henry, *Empire*, p.43). Henry has examined how this influenced Eliot's literary output, and argues that knowing about the imperial context in which she was writing opens Eliot's fiction up to 'new interpretations' (p.143). She states:

I am presenting a new George Eliot, whose imagination and aesthetic principles were shaped by her experiences as a reader and reviewer of colonial literature, a colonial shareholder, a stepmother to colonial emigrants, and, ultimately, a critic of colonial war. This new focus clarifies her metaphoric and explicit references to the empire, as well as her realism, moral perspective, and sense of English identity (p.6).

Henry demonstrates how Eliot's fiction reveals her preoccupations with recurring themes of parental responsibility, migration and emigration, and money (p.87 – 90). She interweaves this with contextual information about Eliot's emotional and financial engagement with empire and imperialism, for example the fact that she invested in Cape Town Rail and the Indian railroads (p.95). Like Meyer and Henry, I am also concerned with charting the influence that empire had on Eliot's output, but I am also curious to discover Eliot's influence on the empire, focalised through the Cape Colony and the institutions of cultural settlement.

While Eliot was dependent on letters and books for her knowledge of the South African colonies, Anthony Trollope had direct experience of them, as he visited in 1877. Trollope's focus on

¹¹ Susan Meyer, *Imperialism at Home: Race and Victorian Women's Fiction*, (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1996).

the networks and structures that keep South Africa running speak to recent studies of his writings which reveal his preoccupation with systems.¹² Mark Turner has argued that:

[...] Trollope is a more networked and global figure than we have generally considered – networked through various media and communication networks of print, in which his work was variously embedded, and networked as a famous travelling man of letters making contact across a range of global routes ('Global Trollope?', p.2).

Turner explores the dual nature of Trollope's networks, through his involvement in the operational aspects of the British postal system, and in his position as an actor in a 'transatlantic literary market' (p.7 and p.12). He reveals Trollope's ambivalence about modernity and the diffuseness of modern society, and his concerns about British travellers' vulnerability when networks of communication and transportation break down:

The irony in Trollope's stories is that a world of seemingly greater connected-ness often leads to even greater separation. The rhythm of global modernity here is arrival and departure rather than connection, and the movement is best imagined as spread and diffusion rather than cohesion (p.5).

Turner's emphasis on the disconnections and missed connections of imperial transportation and communication networks is important for the present project, because it facilitates an uncovering of the fragility and precariousness attendant to colonial settlement in South Africa.

Organised around three chapters, one for each literary institution of colonialism that I identify, this thesis explores how white colonial settlement and belonging was articulated through the colonists' interactions with the library, postal service and press. In the period in which this thesis is concerned, cultural processes, alongside the 'repressive' apparatuses of state such as the army or penal system, played a crucial role in establishing and sustaining white rule.¹³ This, however, was much more fragile than the colonists would like, and required constant reiteration and reinforcement in order to obviate the realisation that white people's relationship to the Cape was one of ambivalence and ambiguity, a lurking and irremovable sense of unbelonging. The colonists used

¹² For more on Trollope and how his literature is underpinned by an interest in networks, and postal networks in particular, see Robert H. Super, *Trollope in the Post Office*, (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1981); Mark W. Turner, 'Global Trollope?', at *The Feeling of Networks*, Panel Discussion, King's College London, 28 March 2011, pp. 1 - 15; Ian Henderson, 'Race and Reading-as-a-Commodity, or, Making Gentlemen in a Colonial World'. (Forthcoming), pp. 1 - 18; Laura Rotunno, *Postal Plots in British Fiction, 1840-1898: Readdressing Correspondence in Victorian Culture*, (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013); Katie-Louise Thomas, *Postal Pleasures: Sex, Scandal, and Victorian Letters*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012).

¹³ Louis Althusser, 'Ideology and Ideological State Apparatus (Notes toward an Investigation)', in *Lenin and Philosophy, and Other Essays*, ed. by Ben Brewster, (New York: Monthly Review Press, 2001), pp. 85 - 126.

cultural means to consolidate their power and contain any threats posed to the colonial British elites by the pre-existing African and Dutch populations in recognisable and efficient British systems. As a result, when the British-imposed systems of bureaucracy broke down, or were abused, the rule of law and the potential success of the imperial project in South Africa were put at risk.

This thesis creates a junction between the fields of history, nineteenth-century book and print culture, postcolonial studies and whiteness studies. It draws from both known and previously little-known archival and printed material from the South African Public Library, as well as well-known nineteenth-century literary texts. These include articles from local nineteenth-century periodicals, the *Cape Monthly Magazine* and the *South African Ladies' Companion*, as well as nineteenth-century records from the South African Public Library and the Popular Library. These were accessed in hard copy at the National Library of South Africa in Cape Town and Pretoria, as well as at the British Library. Searchable digital archives were also helpful, as they enabled a broader and more thorough analysis of the source material than would otherwise have been possible. Online copies of the *Cape Monthly Magazine* were accessed, when available, through the HathiTrust Digital Library and Internet Archive.¹⁴ The literary texts included in this thesis are Anthony Trollope's travel narrative *South Africa*, and his novels *An Old Man's Love* and *The Fixed Period*, as well as George Eliot's and George Henry Lewes's reviews in the *Westminster Review*, and Eliot's *The Mill on the Floss*. By drawing on such a broad spectrum of literary sources, this thesis investigates how metropolitan authors both experienced and influenced colonial South Africa, and at the same time opens up the field of South African nineteenth-century print culture by looking at previously unexamined texts.

The issue of racial terminology is a sensitive one for obvious reasons but it is unavoidable in the context of South Africa's history. This thesis endeavours to give as little offence as possible, whilst at the same time striving to remain historically accurate. When quoting from nineteenth-century source material, derogatory racial labelling is left unaltered. However, when analysing these texts, I replace the terms 'Black', 'Native' and 'Kaffir' with the preferred appellation African or

¹⁴ www.hathitrust.org, www.archive.org

indigenous people, while offensive ethnic labels such as ‘Hottentot’ and ‘Bushman’ are replaced with the contemporary terms Khoikhoi and San.

Literary networks and intersections

The link that this thesis makes between literature and imperialism is well-established. Edward Said’s seminal work, *Culture and Imperialism* traces the important role that culture plays in supporting and maintaining imperial power and domination.¹⁵ By culture he means, ‘all those practices, like the arts of description, communication and representation that have relative autonomy from the economic, social, and political realms’ (p.xii). He argues that the word culture is often imbued with a ‘refining and elevating element’, and that this was drawn upon to justify the aggressive imposition of imperial cultures and identities upon the ‘primitive or barbaric’ people of colonised lands (p.viii and p.xi). As a result, culture is yoked to civilisation and is used by imperial powers to dominate foreign territories by controlling the types of ‘narrative’ that are created (p.xiii).

Said is indebted to Raymond Williams for revealing the thematic linkage between culture and civilisation. In 1953, Williams defined culture as a ‘way of life’, and he expanded this definition in the 1970’s in his book *Keywords: A Vocabulary of Culture and Society*.¹⁶ The later description listed three different definitions of the word culture: firstly as a ‘general process of intellectual, spiritual and aesthetic development’; secondly as a way of life; and thirdly as ‘the works and practices of intellectual and especially artistic creativity’ (*Keywords*, p.90). Williams makes the linkage between culture, refinement and civilisation clear: ‘Civilization is [...] a state of social order or refinement, especially in conscious historical or cultural contrast with barbarism [...]’ (*Keywords*, p.57 – 58). He claims that in the Romantic period, the word ‘culture’ was used as an alternative to ‘civilization’ to ‘express [...]’

¹⁵ Edward Said, *Culture and Imperialism*, (London: Vintage, 1994). For more on the links between culture and civilisation, see also Chris Baldick, *The Social Mission of English Criticism 1848-1932*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1983); David Lloyd and Paul Thomas, *Culture and the State*, (New York: Routledge, 1998).

¹⁶ Raymond Williams, *Culture and Society 1780-1950*, 2nd edn (New York: Columbia University Press, 1983), p. xiv; Raymond Williams, *Keywords: A Vocabulary of Culture and Society*, Revised edn (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985).

human development and other criteria for human well-being' (p.58). Culture and civilisation are both words that express progress, and can be value-loaded in a way that biases western society over barbarian or savage indigenous societies.

The present project draws on both Williams's and Said's definitions of culture in order to explore the role that literature, bureaucratic systems, and imported metropolitan norms of behaviour played in the imposition of white British power in South Africa. Its focus diverges from Williams's and Said's, who both employ the novel as a means to explore the role the culture plays in society and imperialism. While novels are important to the present study, I am more interested in cultural and literary institutions, and the networks of production and consumption that existed between them. I ask what work these institutions of settlement did to encourage the spread of British colonialism and sense of belonging, and explore how South African networks and systems transported local and imperial forms of culture throughout the colony and between the colony and the metropole.¹⁷ These questions are informed by Bruno Latour's theory of networks.¹⁸ He notes that there are two forms of network: physical ones that take the shape of 'interconnected points' like a train network, and social ones, within which actors move and are associated to each other (Latour, pp.128 – 133). Culture is implicated in both types of network: 'Culture does not act surreptitiously behind the actor's back. This most sublime production is manufactured at specific places and institutions [...]' (p.175). It is these institutions, the 'production sites' of culture, and the individuals that interacted within them to which this thesis is attentive (Latour, p.175).

This thesis is strongly informed by Saul Dubow's *A Commonwealth of Knowledge: Science, Sensibility and White South Africa 1820 – 2000*.¹⁹ A cultural historian, Dubow traces South Africa's intellectual history to argue that knowledge 'has served to support claims of nationhood and political ascendancy in [...] South Africa' (p.17). Starting from the early nineteenth century, Dubow explores how the white middle classes in Cape Town began to establish and assert their presence in the public sphere,

¹⁷ For more on the circulation of British cultural commodities in the empire, see John Plotz, *Portable Property: Victorian Culture on the Move*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008).

¹⁸ Bruno Latour, *Reassembling the Social: An Introduction to Actor-Network-Theory*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005).

¹⁹ Saul Dubow, *A Commonwealth of Knowledge: Science, Sensibility, and White South Africa, 1820-2000*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006).

and charts the development of South Africanism – a sense of colonial nationalism and settler belonging which was a ‘major political force’ until the Afrikaans-language Nationalist Party came to power in South Africa in 1948 (p.vii). This project builds upon Dubow’s work by asking how colonial emulation of metropolitan practices drove the development of the Cape’s literary culture. It suggests that there was a tension between the Cape colonists’ desire to imitate and emulate metropolitan print practices and cultural norms, and an equal drive to foster and develop local literary cultures and practices. The Cape’s remote situation on the periphery of the British Empire, combined with its small population, created a dependency upon imported textual commodities to sustain literary, affective and imagined connections with the metropole. However, the Cape’s geographic and temporal distance from the metropole also gave it the space to begin to develop a distinct and unique literary culture. I explore this entanglement of desires for colonial autonomy and for sustained connections to Britain by interrogating how literary culture was ‘made’ in the Cape Colony, and suggest that these conflicting desires propelled the development of the Cape’s literary culture.

The self-conscious fashioning of literary and intellectual networks in the Cape has been the focus of recent historical studies. Kirsten McKenzie focuses on the cultural history of the Cape, and its relationship to Britain and Australia from the late eighteenth century until the mid-nineteenth century. She argues that early nineteenth-century newspapers in the Cape Colony provided the colonists with a public sphere in which they could begin to articulate and broadcast their political affiliations and fledgling sense of colonial identity.²⁰ The increasingly developed nature of print capitalism in the Cape facilitated the creation of a bourgeois public sphere, which in turn stimulated the development of the Cape’s nascent political culture. McKenzie concludes that this emerging political culture laid the foundations for the Cape’s realisation of Representative Government in 1853.²¹ Christopher Holdridge also studies nineteenth-century print culture in the Cape Colony, with

²⁰ Kirsten McKenzie, "'Franklins of the Cape': The *South African Commercial Advertiser* and the Creation of a Colonial Public Sphere, 1824 - 1854', *Kronos*, No.25. (1998/1999), pp. 88 - 102. See her books too, which probe the unstable nature of personal identity in the colonies. (Kirsten McKenzie, *Scandal in the Colonies: Sydney and Cape Town, 1820-1850*, (Carlton, Vic: Melbourne University Press, 2004); Kirsten McKenzie, *A Swindler's Progress: Nobles and Convicts in the Age of Liberty*, (Cambridge, Mass. ; London: Harvard University Press, 2010).)

²¹ Representative government allowed the Cape colonists to draft their own constitution, and introduced a male franchise based on property-ownership. The newly-elected Parliament was still headed by a London-appointed

a focus on satire and how it helped to encourage British solidarity amongst the Cape's inhabitants. He focuses particularly on a periodical titled *Sam Sly's African Journal* (1843 – 1851), and uses it as a springboard to consider how humour was employed to foster feelings of English colonial affinity in the Cape Colony, whilst simultaneously encouraging the colonists to think about their position within the empire as a whole.²² The current project expands upon the work of both of these authors by looking at the Cape during a later phase of political development between the 1850's and 1880's. It asks how the bourgeois elite presented themselves in later periodical publications like the *Cape Monthly Magazine*, and explores the role of gender in the production and consumption of literary commodities.

McKenzie and Holdridge's interest in the relationship between print culture, colonial identity, and the creation of networks of affect and affinity build on Benedict Anderson's classic work, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (1983).²³ Anderson argues that 'nationality [...] nation-ness, as well as nationalism' are underpinned by print culture, because it facilitates the creation of an 'imagined political community' (p.4 and p.6). This community is imagined because its members will never meet each other, or share face-to-face interactions, 'yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion' (p.6). This image is created through print culture, most notably newspapers and novels, which provides 'the technical means for "re-presenting" the *kind* of imagined community that is a nation' (p.24 – 25). In addition to representing the nation back to its readers, the newspaper and book also create an 'extraordinary mass ceremony: the almost precisely simultaneous consumption ("imagining") of textual commodities (p.35). Whilst this consumption may be an activity undertaken at an individual level ('in the lair of the skull'), each reader is conscious that other readers are replicating his actions, and that he is part of a larger community of readers and imaginers (p.35). As a result, print culture and reading create an industrial

Governor, who retained the bulk of executive power in the colony (Dubow, *Commonwealth*, p.64). See also J. L. McCracken, *The Cape Parliament, 1854-1910*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1967).

²² Christopher Holdridge, 'Laughing with Sam Sly: The Cultural Politics of Satire and Colonial British Identity in the Cape Colony, C. 1840-1850', *Kronos*, 36. 1 (2010), pp. 28 - 53; Christopher Holdridge, 'Circulating the *African Journal*: The Colonial Press and Trans-Imperial Britishness in the Mid Nineteenth-Century Cape', *South African Historical Journal*, 62. 3 (2010), pp. 487 - 513.

²³ Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, (London and New York: Verso, 2006).

solution to the increasing secularisation of society, as they 'link fraternity, power and time' together in new ways, and allow readers to imagine themselves as part of a wider, national community (p.36).

As this thesis will show, the importation of metropolitan magazines created the conditions for shared and simultaneous readership in the Cape Colony. The regular arrival and departure of the mail steamers influenced the Cape's social rhythms, as the colonists eagerly consumed the literary commodities unloaded from the ships. However, although Anderson provides us with a powerful model of domestic nationalism, his consideration of nationalism in overseas territories is limited.²⁴ While he acknowledges the development of what he calls 'creole nationalism' in America, and describes the role that American newspapers played in creating local imagined communities of people of 'European descent but born in the Americas', Anderson does not really engage with the experiences of people overseas (p.47 and pp.60 – 67). This project aims to address this absence by asking whether reading British novels and newspapers in Cape Town created the conditions for an extended imagined community of British colonial and metropolitan readers, and as a result, whether it is possible to imagine a national community in a settler colony. Did the time lag created by the mail steamers' month-long journey limit print culture's nation-building properties to the locale of the Cape Colony? Did the awareness that they were always at least a month behind the readers of metropolitan cultural productions disrupt the nation-building function that Anderson attributes to print culture? And how did the colonists cope with the overlapping cycles of colonial and metropolitan print production?

The *Cape Monthly Magazine* serviced a small population of English-speaking readers – in the 1840's there were only 9000 white inhabitants in Cape Town, and they were predominantly Dutch-speaking (Dubow, *Commonwealth*, p.24). The pool of contributors to the *Cape Monthly Magazine* in the 1850's was thus rather small, and due to the networked and interlinked nature of the cultural

²⁴ John Breuilly makes the point that Anderson's argument 'works better for certain cases (Latin America, British East Africa, French Indo-China)' but 'is less convincing for other cases (Russia, India)'. (John Breuilly, 'Approaches to Nationalism', in *Mapping the Nation*, ed. by Gopal Balakrishnan, (London: Verso, 1996), pp. 146 - 174 (p. 159).) Other criticisms find fault with the Anderson's 'uniformly positive view of nationalism', arguing that he weakens his argument by circumventing nationalist organisations like the Nazis (Gopal Balakrishnan, 'The National Imagination', in *Mapping the Nation*, ed. by Gopal Balakrishnan, (London: Verso, 1996), pp. 198 - 225 pp. 207 - 208).

institutions in the Cape, would probably have known each other (Dubow, *Commonwealth*, p.72). In addition to being an imagined community, the Cape's print industry was also a part of a real, 'knowable' community, which interacted in face-to-face social situations.²⁵ This networked coterie of English-speaking men shaped the development of the Cape's literary culture through 'voluntary, reciprocal patterns of communication and exchange'.²⁶ However, this elite group was drawn from an educated, white group of people, and as I shall demonstrate, their confident declarations of belonging were undermined by their exclusive and exclusionary behaviour and practices.

The cultural life of the Cape Colony was dominated by the relationship between the colony and the metropole. However, the Cape colonists also exhibited an interest in trans-imperial developments and occurrences. For example, a keyword-search of the first two volumes of the *Cape Monthly Magazine*, from January to December 1857, shows that the word 'India' appears 78 times, 'Australia' 26 times, 'New Zealand' 21 times and 'Canada' 5 times.²⁷ However, while this thesis notes the existence of intra-colonial relationships between the Cape and other British colonial territories, these are sublated into the relationship between the Cape Colony and the metropole. By keeping a tight focus on the relationship between South Africa and Britain, this thesis demonstrates how the settlers in the Cape attempted to use British literature and culture to deepen their feelings of settlement and belonging to the land. The relationship between the colony and the metropole reveals the fragility of the colonial sense of identity and nationality.²⁸ While the Cape Colony's culture depended on the metropole, it also wanted to be separate from England, and free to develop its own civic structures, all the while remaining within the protection of the military might of the empire. As

²⁵ Raymond Williams, *The Country and the City*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1973), p. 166.

²⁶ Gary Bryan Magee and Andrew S. Thompson, *Empire and Globalisation: Networks of People, Goods and Capital in the British World, C.1850-1914*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), p. 49.

²⁷ The first volume of the *Cape Monthly Magazine* is available online at this address:

https://books.google.co.za/books?id=-H5UAAAAYAAJ&printsec=frontcover&source=gbs_ge_summary_r&cad=0#v=onepage&q&f=false. For more on South Africa's position in the recent proliferation of 'Global South' studies, see for example *South Africa and India: Shaping the Global South*, ed. by Isabel Hofmeyr and Michelle Williams, (Johannesburg: Wits University Press, 2011).

²⁸ Frederick Cooper and Ann Laura Stoler, *Tensions of Empire: Colonial Cultures in a Bourgeois World*, (Berkeley, Calif.: University of California Press, 1997).

the next section will demonstrate, this feeling of vulnerability and insecurity was a result of the almost constant conflict between the white settlers and the indigenous African people that they displaced.

Contexts – whiteness in South Africa

This thesis, and its focus on white power structures, is situated within two contexts. The first is historical, which is centred on the European colonisation of South Africa and the British struggle for cultural ascendancy in the early nineteenth century. The second context is the present day context, in which my own work is embedded. As the following section will show, writing about whiteness and white culture in post-apartheid South Africa is a highly politicised endeavour. Recent student activism at South African universities has called for greater evidence of transformation from European-imposed colonial forms of knowledge and knowledge structures. These debates and discussions show how troubled and problematic a study of white colonial culture in South Africa can be. However, I hope that this project will contribute to the critical understanding of white privilege in South Africa, by highlighting the history of these power structures and demonstrating how they were imposed.

The historical context: a brief history of white settlement in South Africa

In his introduction to *A Military History of South Africa*, Timothy Stapleton notes the ‘centrality of warfare and military structures to the last several centuries of South Africa’s history’.²⁹ South Africa’s militaristic culture was a result of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century European expansionism and African resistance, as well as conflict between the two white settler populations, the English and the Dutch. Writing into a society that was so deeply riven and dangerous would have a profound impact on the local authors in the Cape, and in the way that they formulated and expressed their identity as British colonials. In this context, the work of culture would have had even more ideological force, if

²⁹ Timothy Joseph Stapleton, *A Military History of South Africa: From the Dutch-Khoi Wars to the End of Apartheid*, (Santa Barbara: Praeger, 2010), p. ix.

we take Coleridge's argument that cultivation, or culture, was necessary for a healthy society in the grips of a transformation (quoted in Williams, *Culture*, pp.66 – 67).

South Africa's original point of colonisation was Cape Town, where the Dutch East India Company established a refreshment station in 1652 as a 'pit stop' for vessels travelling between the Netherlands and the East (Stapleton, p.1).³⁰ The founding Dutch population of just 90 people quickly expanded as a result of Dutch immigration, the arrival of French Huguenots escaping religious persecution in 1688, and the importation of approximately 60,000 slaves from the Indies between the 1680's and the 1750's (Ross, *Status*, p.6). Dutch colonial expansion resulted in conflict with the indigenous Khoikhoi population over grazing land. During the Dutch-Khoi wars of the 1660's and 1670's, the Khoikhoi people were subjugated and reduced to poorly paid menial workers, alongside the imported slaves (Ross, *Status*, p.7; Stapleton, p.1).³¹ When the British took control of the Cape Colony in the early 1800's, colonial expansion resumed along the east coast of South Africa, and once again, resulted in conflict with the pre-existing population, the Xhosa people (Stapleton, p.1). Thereafter, the nineteenth century was characterised by almost constant conflict between the white settlers and the African people that they displaced.³² Later wars would also be fought between the rural Dutch, known as Boers, who 'trekked' into South Africa's interior to escape British rule, and the British who followed them. The exercise of white power and settler domination forms the background of this project which, although focused on the cultural expression of British imperialism in South Africa, is nevertheless aware of the military history that supported it.

The violence and racism that underpinned the colonial literature that this project is concerned with was never far beneath the surface. For example, the first volume of the *Cape Monthly Magazine* (January – June 1857) contains regular reports on 'Military Intelligence', updating the colonists on troop movements, as well as recent appointments to roles within the colonial military.³³ Also

³⁰ Robert Ross, *Status and Respectability in the Cape Colony, 1750-1870: A Tragedy of Manners*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), p. 6.

³¹ Vivian Bickford-Smith, *Ethnic Pride and Racial Prejudice in Victorian Cape Town: Group Identity and Social Practice, 1875-1902*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), p. 11.

³² See Stapleton for more in-depth detail of the various wars and skirmishes.

³³ 'General Summary', *Cape Monthly Magazine*, February 1857, pp. 131 - 132 (p. 132); 'General Summary', *Cape Monthly Magazine*, April 1857, pp. 258 - 260 (p. 259); 'General Summary', *Cape Monthly Magazine*, May 1857, pp.

published in this volume is a poem titled 'Scene of the Zulu Massacre, After the Battle'.³⁴ The poem is about the Battle of Ndongakusuka, which was the result of a succession struggle between two of the Zulu king's sons. The winning son massacred the losing son and all of his followers:

Rotting on the reeking strand,
Children of wild Zulu-land,
Stark and bare their corpses lie [sic]
Stretched beneath the scorching sky –
While the scavengers of heaven,
Gorge the feast that death has given (p.179).

Thereafter follows a description of vultures and wild dogs eating the remains, and the poet predicts that within two days, nothing will remain of the bodies apart from a 'few bleached bones' (p.180). By printing this poem, the *Cape Monthly Magazine* presented indigenous culture as being at war with itself, and arguments like this gave the colonists grounds for imposing 'civilising', yet equally violent, British power upon the colony.³⁵

By giving himself the moniker 'Natalia', the poet above indicates his affinity with the self-named Natalians, a group of British settlers based in the colony of Natal, established to the east of the Cape Colony. According to Robert Bickers, Natal was the only colony in which British settlers outnumbered the Dutch, and this encouraged them to develop as a 'distinctive, even idiosyncratic, British community'.³⁶ However, as this section will demonstrate, the development of communities of English-speaking people was not limited to Natal, but occurred across the South African colonies.

As the nineteenth-century developed, the question of whether it was possible to 'grow' Englishmen and sustain Englishness in the colonies was one that occupied nineteenth-century metropolitan commentators and colonists alike.³⁷ Peter Mandler suggests that after the European revolutions of 1848, the idea that English people had a distinctive 'national character' which had

324 - 326 (p. 326); 'General Summary', *Cape Monthly Magazine*, June 1857, pp. 387 - 389 (p. 389). This practice was abandoned in later issues of the magazine.

³⁴ Natalia, 'Scene of the Zulu Massacre, after the Battle', *Cape Monthly Magazine*, March 1857, pp. 179 - 180.

³⁵ George W. Stocking, Jr., *Victorian Anthropology*, (New York: The Free Press: Macmillan, 1987), p. 237.

³⁶ Robert A. Bickers, "'The Last Outpost': The Natalians, South Africa and the British Empire.", in *Settlers and Expatriates: Britons over the Seas*, ed. by Robert A. Bickers, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), pp. 150 - 176 (p. 150).

³⁷ For example, in a letter to James Anthony Froude, Ruskin said: 'You can't have colonies of Englishmen...It is not merely logically impossible: it is vegetably, minerally, and animally impossible. You must turn out those blackguard Goths. You must grow Englishmen in England'. Quoted in Waldo Hilary Dunn, *James Anthony Froude: A Biography*, 2 vols (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1963), II, p. 355.

prevented them from partaking in similar revolts began to gain traction.³⁸ The unique psychological traits and personal characteristics which made up the English national character were said to include:

[...] self-government, a man's ability to stand on his own two feet, a devotion to hard work, and the enjoyment of prosperity rather than listless submission to authority (Mandler, p.64).

According to Mandler, the wave of English nationalism which rose after 1848 found expression in a revived interest in English history, and particularly in the myths about Anglo-Saxonism (p.86). These had been in circulation in England since at least the seventeenth century, when the Arthurian fable of racial origin was superseded by an emphasis on England's Saxon heritage, with King Alfred as a figurehead (Mandler, p.87). Robert Young shows how from the middle of the nineteenth century, the term Anglo-Saxon was used to refer to modern, rather than historical, English people, and he suggests that its new use came into vogue during the American Revolution as a display of settler identification with their English heritage.³⁹ Indeed, the main thesis of Young's *The Idea of English Ethnicity* (2008) is that:

Englishness was created for the diaspora – an ethnic identity designed for those who were precisely not English, but rather of English descent – the peoples of the English diaspora moving around the world: Americans, Australians, New Zealanders, South Africans, even, at a pinch, the English working class (p.1).

Young argues that Englishness could be 'adopted or appropriated anywhere by anyone who cultivated the right language, looks and culture' (p.1 – 2). As this thesis will demonstrate, Englishness and English norms of behaviour and conduct were constructs which were constantly under attack in colonial South Africa, as the settlers attempted to negotiate what it meant for them to be non-domiciled English people, in a British territory abroad. Young has also argued that '[...] fixity of [national] identity is only sought in situations of instability and disruption'.⁴⁰ These instabilities within the empire were caused by colonial expansion, which necessarily involved the 'dislocation of people', the 'disruption of domestic culture', and fears about racial difference (Young, *Desire*, p.4). All of these destabilising elements will be observed in the present project's investigation of white settler culture in

³⁸ Peter Mandler, *The English National Character: The History of an Idea from Edmund Burke to Tony Blair*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2006), p. 59.

³⁹ Robert Young, *The Idea of English Ethnicity*, (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2008), pp. 15 - 16.

⁴⁰ Robert Young, *Colonial Desire: Hybridity in Theory, Culture, and Race*, (London: Routledge, 1995), p. 3.

the Cape, as the colonists attempted to mitigate the identity-disrupting effects of living in an overseas British territory by emphasising their English heritage whilst at the same time articulating their increasing levels of colonial nationalism, based on a shared South African experience.

British colonists in South Africa staged a struggle for British cultural ascendancy which was fought on two fronts. Firstly, the English settlers had to supplant pre-existing Dutch colonial administrative and cultural structures. Secondly, the white colonists needed to find a place for themselves in an African context, which as we have seen was characterised in the *Cape Monthly Magazine* as a perilous endeavour. The role of culture as a civilising force was important to both. The intercolonial battle for British cultural dominance in South Africa in the nineteenth century began in Cape Town following the second British occupation of the colony in 1806, after the outbreak of the Napoleonic Wars. The British wanted to secure South Africa as a strategic refreshment station, as it was situated on what had become a valuable trading route with the east (Ross, *Status*, p.7 and p.40).⁴¹ The Cape Colony at that time was a recognisably Dutch outpost – the Dutch population outnumbered the English, the architecture was of single-storey Dutch design, and the civic infrastructure included canals, or gracht, running through the town (Dubow, *Commonwealth*, p.18 Worden, p.38 – 41).⁴² The British administration soon began to demonstrate a desire to ‘assimilate the Institutions of this country to those of England’.⁴³ James Sturgis takes this statement as the starting point of his analysis of the implementation of anglicising policies in the Cape Colony. He defines anglicisation in South Africa as ‘those processes or policies which had as their aim the assimilation of Afrikaners [the colonial urban and rural Dutch population] into a predominantly English culture’ (Sturgis, p.8). However, as Vivian Bickford-Smith points out, anglicisation in the Cape included the ‘political, economic, social and cultural transformations’ brought about by the

⁴¹ Alan Lester, *Imperial Networks: Creating Identities in Nineteenth-Century South Africa and Britain*, (London: Routledge, 2001), p. 9; Nigel Worden, Elizabeth Van Heyningen, and Vivian Bickford-Smith, *Cape Town: The Making of a City. An Illustrated Social History*, (Cape Town: David Phillip, 1998), p. 86.

⁴² Alan F. Hattersley, *An Illustrated Social History of South Africa*, (Cape Town: A.A. Balkema, 1969), pp. 11 - 14.

⁴³ John Cradock, letter quoted in James Sturgis, 'Anglicisation at the Cape of Good Hope in the Early Nineteenth Century', *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, 11. 1 (1982), pp. 5 - 31 (p. 8).

British, which affected not only the Dutch, but all of the Cape's inhabitants.⁴⁴ Anglicisation is thus an imperial and colonial project, aimed at assimilating and governing foreign, non-English populations, and establishing and consolidating British colonial power and influence overseas.

The British settlers' attitudes to the colonial Dutch were ambivalent. Eighteenth-century exposure to the rural Dutch Boers had created negative stereotypes about them:

Unwilling to work, unable to think; with a mind disengaged from every sort of care and reflection, indulging to excess in the gratification of every sensual appetite, the African peasant grows to an unwieldy size [...] ⁴⁵

These stereotypes persisted throughout the nineteenth century, and influenced new arrivals to the colony – Thornton Lewes lamented the 'hopeless stupidity of Boer children' when he considered becoming a school master in 1866.⁴⁶ However, British attitudes towards the upper class Cape Dutch population were decidedly more positive. Robert Ross demonstrates how elite Cape Dutch officials played an important role in facilitating British rule over the colony by mediating between the British Colonial Governor and the Dutch colonists (Ross, *Status*, p.46). These Anglo-Dutch ties were strengthened through intermarriage and mutual cultural exchange to create 'an identifiable Anglo-Dutch colonial oligarchy' (Dubow, *Commonwealth*, p.22). The British relationship with the elite Cape Dutch also facilitated the implementation of legal policies to establish English as the administrative language of the colony in 1822 – 1823 (Sturgis, p.7; Ross, *Status*, p.55 and Dubow, *Commonwealth*, p.21). As Sturgis has demonstrated, the elite Dutch were aware of the advantages of speaking English, which included better employment prospects and improved social mobility, not only within the colony but within the British Empire as a whole (Sturgis, p.11). In addition to these practical concerns, the colonial Dutch were also ambivalent toward the creolised version of Dutch which was

⁴⁴ Vivian Bickford-Smith, 'Revisiting Anglicisation in the Nineteenth Century Cape Colony', *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, 31. 2 (2003), pp. 82 - 99 (p. 87).

⁴⁵ John Sir Barrow, *An Account of Travels into the Interior of Southern Africa in the Years 1797 and 1798: Including Cursory Observations on the Geology and Geography of the Southern Part of That Continent*, (London: Cadell and Davies, 1801), p. 78.

<http://books.google.co.uk/books?id=TswTAAAAYAAJ&printsec=frontcover&source=gbs_ge_summary_r&cad=0#v=onepage&q&f=false> [accessed 25 May 2012].

⁴⁶ Thornton Lewes to G.H. Lewes, 2 June 1866, *The George Eliot Letters*, ed. by Gordon Sherman Haight, 9 vols (London: Oxford University Press, 1956), IV, p. 376.

increasingly being spoken by the slaves and working classes.⁴⁷ 'Cape Dutch' was viewed by both the upper class urban Dutch and the British as an 'uncultured patois', and anglicisation was a welcome resurgence of metropolitan European influence (Davids, p.36).

The process of anglicising the Cape Colony was two-pronged. Overt 'official' changes, such as changing the official language of the colony to English in 1822, occurred concurrently with more subtle Anglophone influences such as the introduction of British pastimes and leisure activities.⁴⁸ However, the elite Dutch population's concerns about how the change in the colony's official language would affect their civil and religious practices meant that it was a mediated process. Whilst all government-sponsored schools became English-speaking, bilingual private schools flourished (Ross, *Status*, p.56-57). The Dutch continued to worship in their own language, and even assimilated imported Scottish ministers into their community (Dubow, *Commonwealth*, p.21). The restructuring of the legal institutions and the civil service was also characterised by negotiation – the newly imported British bureaucratic structures were populated by Dutch civil servants, and Roman-Dutch law was retained as the legal framework of the Colony (Dubow, *Commonwealth*, p.23 – 24 and Sturgis, p.20 – 22).

Despite the merging of Anglo-Dutch civil structures in the Cape Colony, the influence of the English became increasingly felt in the judicial and commercial infrastructure of the colony. By the late 1820's the use of English was successfully implemented in the judicial courts across the colony, albeit with interpreters when necessary (Ross, *Status*, p.58). British rule brought British investment to the colony, particularly in the form of compensation for the abolition of slavery in the 1830's.⁴⁹ The increased flow of British capital meant that commercial and cultural institutions could be established to service the requirements of the expanding British population in the Cape (Dubow, *Commonwealth*,

⁴⁷ Achmat Davids, 'The Coloured Image of Afrikaans in Nineteenth Century Cape Town', *Kronos*, 17. (1990), pp. 36 - 47.

⁴⁸ Vivian Bickford-Smith, 'Leisure and Social Identity in Cape Town, British Cape Colony, 1838 – 1910', *Kronos*, 25. (1998 - 1999), pp. 103 - 128. Saul Dubow, 'How British Was the British World? The Case of South Africa', *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, 37. 1 (2009), pp. 1-27 (p. 9).

⁴⁹ Wayne Dooling, *Slavery, Emancipation and Colonial Rule in South Africa*, (Scottsville, South Africa: University of KwaZulu-Natal Press, 2007).

p.25). Thus by the 1830's, the Cape Colony was evolving from a rural Dutch agrarian society to a recognisably commercial British settlement, whilst still retaining some Dutch influences.

In 1836 Charles Darwin observed this when the *Beagle* stopped off at the Cape on its return journey. He remarked on the spread of British imperialism by noting that “‘little embryo Englands are hatching’” in colonies all over the world. Darwin’s experience of the Cape was that it was a “‘great inn’” providing accommodation and trading opportunities to merchants and sailors on the “‘highway to the east’”.⁵⁰ This reductive description of the Cape Colony emphasises its commercial expansion at the expense of its cultural and political development. Darwin’s implication that the Cape’s role within the empire was as a glorified boarding house also ignores the complex web of connections between Great Britain and the Cape Colony. As this project will demonstrate, the ebb and flow of people, resources and information was not a one-way journey from the metropolis outwards. Rather the Cape Colony was a node within an interconnecting imperial web, communication with which was facilitated by the increasing anglicisation of the Cape Colony.

In addition to the overt anglicised influences mentioned above, a cultural transformation was also taking place in the Cape Colony. British sports, such as horse racing and cricket were introduced and became very popular, both with the upper and the labouring classes. Both sports were viewed as bringing a sense of Englishness to Cape Town (Bickford-Smith, ‘Leisure’, pp.108 – 109). For example, an article in *The Cape Monthly Magazine* in 1873, by a contributor who calls himself ‘An Old Peripatetic’ promotes the ‘political, ethical and physical’ advantages of playing cricket.⁵¹ He claims that the game is socially inclusive, teaches quintessentially English values of fair play and discipline, and functions as an outlet for boys’ physical ‘Berserker’ energy (‘Cape Town and Cricket’, p. 161 and p.166). The writer also remarks on the universal appeal of cricket – African children play games in the street, whilst military and civilian teams play matches at Fort De Knokke. Indeed, cricket was so socially cohesive that little girls could escape their usual domestic pursuits in favour of ‘bowling to

⁵⁰ Charles Darwin, quoted in Adrian Desmond and James Moore, *Darwin*, (London: Penguin, 1992), p. 184.

⁵¹ An Old Peripatetic, ‘Cape Town and Cricket’, *Cape Monthly Magazine*, March 1873, pp. 161 - 166. For more on cricket and the colonies, see the opening chapter of Simon Gikandi, *Maps of Englishness: Writing Identity in the Culture of Colonialism*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996).

brothers' ('Cape Town and Cricket', p.163). English ideological values could therefore be imparted on to all echelons of Capetonian society through the medium of sport.

The growing sense of Anglo-colonial identity in Cape Town found expression in the politics of the colony. From the 1840's onwards, there was increasing agitation in the Cape Colony for self-government via a representative assembly. Along with concerns that conservative British officialdom was stifling the Cape's economic investment and development, a number of events led the colonists to question whether the British government had their interests at heart (Ross, *Status*, p.166; Dubow, *Commonwealth*, pp.62 – 63 and Dubow, 'British', p.9). Perhaps the most important of these events was the so-called 'Convict Crisis' of 1848 – 1849, which was precipitated by Earl Grey's proclamation that the Cape was to share in the 'common burdens of the empire' by becoming a penal colony.⁵² However, he underestimated the feelings of concern and 'excitement' amongst the colonists when he ordered the *Neptune*, containing 242 convicts, to set sail for the Cape Colony from Bermuda in 1848 (Earl Grey to Harry Smith, *Colonial Policy*, p.210).

The protests that ensued were vociferous, and proved to be socially cohesive by uniting the English and Dutch settlers of all classes under a common cause. Mass protests were undertaken, insurance companies refused to insure those who planned to employ convicts, newspaper campaigns were organised, petitions were sent to Queen Victoria, and an economic boycott was imposed on all business transactions with the colonial administration (Ross, *Status*, p.161, Dubow, *Commonwealth*, p.62 and Holdridge, 'Sam Sly', p.50).⁵³ When the *Neptune* reached Simon's Bay in September 1849, the convicts were not allowed to disembark, and spent the five months on the ship while Sir Harry Smith, the Colonial Governor, attempted to mediate between the protestors and Earl Grey. Eventually, Grey sent the order to divert the *Neptune* to Van Diemen's Land, and broke the impasse with the Cape colonists. The Cape Colony's increasingly robust sense of political identity, coupled with the events of the Convict Crisis, had the effect of mobilising the white colonists and uniting

⁵² Letter from Earl Grey to Sir Harry Smith, 30 November 1849. In Henry George Grey Earl Grey, *The Colonial Policy of Lord John Russell's Administration*, 2nd edn (London: Bentley, 1853), p. 215. <http://books.google.co.uk/books?id=D9Y9AAAACAAJ&printsec=frontcover&source=gbs_ge_summary_r&cad=0#v=onepage&q&f=false> [accessed 3 September 2012].

⁵³ See also Alan F. Hattersley, *The Convict Crisis and the Growth of Unity; Resistance to Transportation in South Africa and Australia, 1848-1853*, (Pietermaritzburg: University of Natal Press, 1965).

both Dutch and English under one cause. Anglicisation had begun to mutate into a different form of patriotism – South Africanism.

In the years following the Convict Crisis, the colonists in Cape Town began to reshape their sense of ‘national’ identity. Constitutionalism was a key part to this. With the advent of Representative Government in 1853, followed by Responsible Government in 1873, the colonists began to think of the Cape as a separate entity within the British Empire (Dubow, ‘British’, p.9 and Dubow, *Commonwealth*, p.64 and p.122.). Prominent figures, such as the publishing magnate and politician Saul Solomon, began to refer to themselves as ‘Afrikanders’, taking care all the while to situate this new identity firmly within the British Empire:

[...] let me say that I have no wish to disavow my being an Englishman [...] I wish ever to remain under the jurisdiction of the British Crown. So that I do not speak of being an Afrikaner in disparagement of being an Englishman. I rather glory in being an Englishman.⁵⁴

This sense of dual nationality was also exhibited by new immigrants to the Colony. For example, in their letters home, Thornton and Herbert Lewes refer to themselves as ‘young Africanders [sic]’ when reporting on Bertie’s recent arrival in Natal.⁵⁵ Afrikaner identity was thus still very much aligned with British culture and values, but was also influenced by African experience. Although the Cape Colony had evolved from the ‘embryo England’ that Darwin had witnessed into a far more complex organism capable of self-government, it was reluctant to sever all its ties from the Mother country. This sense of dualness and hybridity formed the foundation of white colonial belonging in South Africa in the mid-nineteenth century.⁵⁶

⁵⁴ In Ethel Drus, ‘The Political Career of Saul Solomon, Member of the Cape Legislative Assembly from 1854 to 1883’, (unpublished MA thesis, University of Cape Town, 1939), p. 11.

⁵⁵ Thornton Lewes to George Henry Lewes, 9 December 1866, in *The George Eliot Letters*, ed. by Gordon Sherman Haight, 9 vols (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1978), VIII, p. 390.

⁵⁶ I take the term ‘hybridity’ from Homi Bhabha’s *The Location of Culture*, as my thinking is informed by his sense of the cultural hybridity that is produced in situations of colonisation. (Homi K. Bhabha, *The Location of Culture*, Rev. edn (London: Routledge, 2004).

The current context: whiteness studies

While recent, and much needed, studies have sought to recover lost and hidden histories of the people who were subjugated by the British and Afrikaans governments in South Africa, this project turns its critical focus to explore nineteenth-century South African whiteness and the complexities of white culture.⁵⁷ Dubow stakes a claim for the significance of the study of white hegemony in South Africa, arguing that ‘important aspects of South African history risk being occluded or lost if the role of whites is viewed too narrowly in terms of settler colonialism and exploitation, and if resistance to apartheid becomes our only historical frame of reference’ (*Commonwealth*, p.10). His defence of the importance of the history of white culture in South Africa comes at a time when white South African academics are negotiating how one writes about the dominance of white culture in an African context. Some critics have turned to critical whiteness studies, which has its origins in America, to begin the conversation about the challenges and difficulties posed by being a white academic writing about white hegemony.⁵⁸

Ruth Frankenberg’s sociological exploration of the intersections between race, gender and class in the 1990’s gives a multi-dimensional definition of whiteness:

First, whiteness is a location of structural advantage, of race privilege. Second, it is a “standpoint,” a place from which white people look at ourselves, at others, and at society. Third, “whiteness” refers to a set of cultural practices that are usually unmarked and unnamed (Frankenberg, p.1).

Whiteness studies aim to uncover and map the history and current practices of white privilege, to challenge its domination and discover how ‘whiteness’ has become a ‘mythical norm’, through which

⁵⁷ See, for example, Isabel Hofmeyr’s work on oral literacy in South Africa, and her exploration of Gandhi’s involvement in print culture in South Africa (Isabel Hofmeyr, *"We Spend Our Years as a Tale That Is Told": Oral Historical Narrative in a South African Chieftdom*, (Johannesburg: Witwatersrand University Press, 1993); Isabel Hofmeyr, *Gandhi's Printing Press: Experiments in Slow Reading*, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2013).) See also Archie L. Dick, *The Hidden History of South Africa's Book and Reading Cultures*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2012); David Atwell, *Rewriting Modernity: Studies in Black South African Literary History*, (Scottsville, South Africa: University of KwaZulu-Natal Press, 2005).

⁵⁸ See for example, Toni Morrison, *Playing in the Dark: Whiteness and the Literary Imagination*, (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1992); Vron Ware, *Beyond the Pale: White Women, Racism, and History*, (London ; New York: Verso, 1992); Theodore W. Allen, *Invention of the White Race*, 2 vols (London: Verso, 1993), I; Ruth Frankenberg, *White Women, Race Matters: The Social Construction of White Women*, (London: Routledge, 1993).

white people wield societal power.⁵⁹ More recently, white South African academics have begun using critical whiteness studies as a self-reflexive tool to consider the role that they play in knowledge-production and power relations in South Africa.⁶⁰ For example, Leon de Kock begins his discussion of the applicability of critical whiteness studies to a South African context by writing:

I would rather spare readers the "I-am-a-white-scholar" confession, followed by the predictable avowals of subjectivity, complicity and positionality that one sometimes encounters in critical scholarship around race and power relations. I would rather allow that complexity to speak for itself, implicitly and by implication.⁶¹

The implicitness of race, and how de Kock's background influences his reading of critical whiteness studies, is echoed by Derek Hook in his essay on Steve Biko's critique of white liberalism:

I may not be the best person to attempt such a contrapuntal re-reading of Biko. More than once I have been made aware, by students and colleagues, that my reading of Biko is perhaps necessarily skewed, distorted by my background, as if there is an epistemological break present in a given white South African's reading of Biko's essays. There are in fact two pitfalls here. First, the danger of replicating precisely what Biko warns against, the liberal white subject's re-representation of black critique, that is, the situation of me speaking for, or over Biko, of using him to my own ends. Second, and perhaps more insidiously, there is the prospect here of my own performative attempt – in expressing a fidelity to Biko – to demonstrate, to implicitly prove, my own non-racism. Neither of these are charges that I can fully exculpate myself from.⁶²

Both authors demonstrate a high level of self-awareness when thinking about how their own race and attitudes toward race influence their academic writing. However, neither of them attempt to resolve the anxieties of being a white academic, writing about whiteness studies and race. Whilst pointing to the potential pitfalls of critical whiteness studies, they both also acknowledge its usefulness as a framework in which to position their interrogations of race and racism in South Africa.

⁵⁹ Audre Lorde, 'Age, Race, Class and Sex: Women Redefining Difference', in *Sister Outsider: Essays and Speeches*, ed. by Nancy K. Boreau, (Berkeley: Crossing Press, 2007), pp. 114 - 124 (p. 116).

⁶⁰ These academics build upon a critical tradition established by the University of the Witwatersrand's History Workshop of the late 1970's and 1980's. Influenced by the cultural, political and ideological changes taking place in the country at the time, the History Workshop aimed to popularise South Africa history, in order to challenge the dominant, biased narratives that had been imposed upon learners by the Afrikaans National Party. For more information on the History Workshop see Philip Bonner, 'New Nation, New History: The History Workshop in South Africa, 1977-1994', *The Journal of American History*, 81. 3 (1994), pp. 977-985; David Atwell, 'Political Supervision: The Case of the 1990 Wits History Workshop', *Pretexts: Studies in Writing and Culture*, 2. 1 (1990), pp. 78 - 85; Belinda Bozzoli, 'Class Community and Ideology in the Evolution of South African Society', at African Studies Seminar, African Studies Institute, University of the Witwatersrand, May 1985, pp. 1 - 40.

⁶¹ Leon de Kock, 'Blanc De Blanc: Whiteness Studies – a South African Connection?', *Journal of Literary Studies*, 22. 1-2 (2006), pp. 175 - 189 (p. 176).

⁶² Derek Hook, 'Retrieving Biko: A Black Consciousness Critique of Whiteness', *African Identities*, 9. 1 (2011), pp. 19 - 32 (p. 20).

The possible drawbacks of situating one's work within the realm of critical whiteness studies are eloquently laid out by Sara Ahmed in her examination of the non-performativity of anti-racism.⁶³ Whilst acknowledging that 'whiteness studies are [...] deeply invested in producing anti-racist forms of knowledge and pedagogy', she points out the risks inherent in making whiteness the focus of academic study (para. 3). Doing so, she argues, risks reifying whiteness and making whiteness studies a 'discourse of love [...] that elevates whiteness into a social and bodily ideal' (para. 5). Whilst it is important to keep these limitations in mind (as I have tried to do whilst writing this thesis), the original aims of whiteness studies – the uncovering and examination of white privilege in order to contest it – nevertheless make it a significant and useful critical tool. As Jonathan Jansens argues, in the context of South Africa's current transition from the apartheid regime to democracy, '[...] I do not know of another way to get away from race unless you talk through race'.⁶⁴ This thesis aims to participate in the discussion about white domination and white privilege by examining the foundations of white hegemony in the Cape Colony.

As a South African-born British writer who has recently returned to Johannesburg, this project is a history of my own cultural heritage. Whilst my thesis makes a claim for my own white belonging in South Africa, I must also acknowledge the ambivalence of my position within the history of white privilege in South Africa. My own entanglement in the shadows cast by recently dismantled power structures is clear. It is a history that all academics who study Victorian history, art and culture should be aware of. What I hope to do in this project is interrogate some of the nineteenth-century origins of these power structures with a view to gaining a better understanding of them.

Maggie MacKellar addresses the topic of white colonial belonging in her book *Core of my Heart, my Country*.⁶⁵ In it, she traces the narratives of ten women and their responses to the new landscapes to which they were exposed in Canada and Australia, starting in the nineteenth century and finishing

⁶³ Sara Ahmed, 'Declarations of Whiteness: The Non-Performativity of Anti-Racism', *Borderlands*, 3.2 (2004) <http://www.borderlands.net.au/vol3no2_2004/ahmed_declarations.htm> [accessed 09/10/2014].

⁶⁴ Jonathan Jansen, 'Keynote', at Indexing the Human: From Classification to a Critical Politics of Transformation, Stellenbosch University, 16 September 2014. See also Jonathan Jansen, *We Need to Talk*, (Johannesburg: Bookstorm and Pan Macmillan, 2011).

⁶⁵ Maggie MacKellar, *Core of My Heart, My Country: Women's Sense of Place and the Land in Australia and Canada*, (Victoria: Melbourne University Press, 2004).

in the mid-twentieth century. Describing how these women had to make their homes and lives in the New World, MacKellar acknowledges the 'troubling ambiguity that emerges when we confront them trying to find a relationship to place in a stolen land' (p.7). MacKellar attempts to resolve this ambiguity by focussing on the sense of hope she gains from the interracial female friendships that some of her ten frontier women experienced (p.17). Returning to the topic in her conclusion to the book, MacKellar writes:

Reading the words of women who lived in the new land, we are left with these women's stories, which give us a richness of experience, a way of seeing place that is intimately related to personal and community identity. They also point us to acknowledge what our sense of place cost the indigenous people (p.273).

Ultimately unable to resolve this tension between white belonging and indigenous displacement, MacKellar suggests that, rather than focussing on our differences we ought to instead focus on the commonality of women's experiences in the New World, regardless of race. Citing Marie Rose Smith, one of the few women in MacKellar's book who formed relationships with the indigenous people of Canada, MacKellar claims that Smith's life '[...] shows us an acceptance of the ways our different communities are linked together' (p.274).

I find MacKellar's resolution to her book unsatisfying and vague in this regard, especially in the context of some of the post-transition South African texts I have read.⁶⁶ For example, Pumla Gobodo-Madikizela's book *A Human Being Died that Night* opens with an assessment of her sense of belonging in the newly democratic South Africa.⁶⁷ After finishing her doctoral fellowship at Harvard University in 1994, Gobodo-Madikizela describes her return to South Africa following the landmark elections in April of that year:

When I returned to South Africa in June of that year, on a beautiful clear winter day, I became aware for the first time that in my past travels I could not have described myself as South African. I could only say that I was *from* South Africa. I remember thinking as my plane landed that day in Cape Town, This is *my* country, *my* home. Driving from the airport, past Langa Township, where I grew up [...] I couldn't help recalling that when I was a child living in the township, Cape Town had been out of my reach. As township dwellers we were Cape Towners in name only. I never truly saw Table Mountain, the epitome of the beauty of this magnificent city, although it is within visual reach of the township; it was a part of the world that had tried to strip my people of their dignity and respect, part of the world that had reduced them to second-class citizens in their own country (pp.6-7).

⁶⁶ By post-transition, I am referring to those written after the first democratic elections in South Africa in 1994.

⁶⁷ Pumla Gobodo-Madikizela, *A Human Being Died That Night: A South African Story of Forgiveness*, (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2003).

Goboda-Madikizela's sense of alienation from the landscape of her hometown, because of its association with indigenous dispossession and inter-racial violence and oppression, makes MacKellar's claim for the universality of feminine experience seem inadequate.

How, then, can I hope to explore the translocation of white British culture to the Cape Colony and use that study to stake a claim for my own sense of belonging in South Africa, when my 'belonging' is based on the displacement and oppression of people with a far better right to call South Africa '*my* Country, *my* home' than I do (Gobodo-Madikizela, p.6)? My response to this is to turn, yet again, to assess Derek Hook's approach. He writes:

If we read Biko and Ahmed together we might suggest that today's version of "I am a progressive liberal, I am against apartheid" is "I admit how the systematic oppressions of apartheid racism benefited me, I am aware of my own latent racism, but I am going to give something back" (p.27).

To situate this quote in context, at this point in his article Hook is considering what he calls 'charitable anti-racism' as 'one of the dominant modes of repentant whiteness today' (p.27 and p.28). He admits his own participation in this discourse, and argues that 'such declarations or gestures can be genuine – indeed can be accepted in good faith – that they need not always slip back into patterns of pre-existing structural privilege' (p.28). The current project aims to participate in this discourse by exploring how my position as a white academic in South Africa is founded on historical cultural structures of power.

In their introduction to a special edition of the *Journal of Southern African Studies* on the theme of the 'New South Africa', Elleke Boehmer and Deborah Gaitskell identify the trope of 'transition' in South African fiction as being a particularly persistent one.⁶⁸ They argue that 'regardless of attempts at reconciliation, certain well-established hierarchies remain embedded, and the society remains in transition. The task of the writer and the artist therefore, is to continue to find ways of giving form to a transformational history, to inscribe road maps through the "occult zone"' (p.727). As an academic writer, can I position myself as one of these writerly explorers? And as a result, could whiteness studies in South Africa be positioned in this transitional landscape as similarly transformational,

⁶⁸ Elleke Boehmer and Deborah Gaitskell, 'Editorial', *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 30. 4 (2004), pp. 725-729.

guiding the academy from white-centred thinking to a more global approach? Leon de Kock argues that in South Africa:

The whole project of whiteness [...] was built on a taxonomy of overmastering knowledge, a scientific racism in which classification was the key element. Knowledge was always power in South Africa's intercultural history, and classificatory knowledge was its edge.⁶⁹

De Kock here is speaking about the so-called 'scientific' basis of racial classification in South Africa, but his point that knowledge is power in South Africa is still pertinent today.⁷⁰ Thus I would argue that whilst studying whiteness in a literary context risks entrenching its academic hegemony, not studying whiteness and white culture risks leaving whiteness and white privilege unacknowledged.

Thus in addition to staking a claim for my white belonging in South Africa, I am also staking a claim for the importance of studying the historical basis of white cultural privilege. Whilst the literature and the cultural products of the segregated past may be unpalatable and offensive to modern readers, studying it is nevertheless a valuable exercise. The Preamble to the South African National Heritage Resources Act of 1999 states this position eloquently:

Our heritage is unique and precious and it cannot be renewed. It helps us to define our cultural identity and therefore lies at the heart of our spiritual well-being and has the power to build our nation. It has the potential to affirm our diverse cultures, and in doing so, shape our national character. It educates, it deepens our understanding of society and encourages us to empathise with the experience of others. It facilitates healing and material and symbolic restitution and it promotes new and previously neglected research into our rich oral traditions and customs.⁷¹

Chapter outline

This thesis is divided into three chapters, one for each of my institutions of literary colonialism. Since the existence of George Eliot's books in the South African Public Library forms the starting point for this project, Chapter One investigates Eliot's relationship to South Africa alongside the history of the

⁶⁹ Leon de Kock, 'The Call of the Wild: Speculations on a White Counterlife in South Africa', *English in Africa*, 37. 1 (2010), pp. 15–39 (p. 27).

⁷⁰ For more about this see Saul Dubow, *Scientific Racism in Modern South Africa*, (Johannesburg: Witwatersrand University Press, 1995).

⁷¹ 'South African National Heritage Resources Act', <http://www.unesco.org/culture/natlaws/media/pdf/southafrica/za_natheritagresources1999_engorof.pdf> [accessed 06 November 2014].

South African Public Library. It considers the colonial careers of Eliot's two sets of offspring – her step-sons and her books – and compares the relative successes and failures of her investment of human and cultural capital in the Cape. This section asks what kind of work the colonists expected imported English books, and in particular those by Eliot, to do in the colony. It argues that rather than using them as source material for nostalgic longings for home, the colonists used Eliot's books to mould their developing literary and national identity. I show that the Cape colonists were preoccupied with the question of how to 'civilise' the settler population, and that this discussion was focalised through the library because of the civilising properties that were invested in the books that it held.

The second chapter of this thesis explores the history of the English-language periodical press in South Africa, in order to assess how white belonging was articulated by the Cape's writers and journalists. This chapter focuses on the *Cape Monthly Magazine* because it was the longest-running literary periodical published in nineteenth-century Cape Town. A selection of articles from the *Cape Monthly Magazine* has been chosen to demonstrate the development of an indigenous white settler literature in the Cape. Despite advertising the *Cape Monthly Magazine* as being 'of special Colonial interest' and 'racy of the soil', I demonstrate the magazine's English heritage and influences.⁷² In particular, an article titled 'Homeward Bound' which was published in July 1861 is used to consider the tidal and cyclical nature of British literary influence on the Cape. The Cape's periodical print industry is read as representing the duality of white settler identity as both English and South African. I suggest that the tension that arose between the desire to imitate metropolitan practices and the aspiration to advance the Cape's literary and cultural structures drove the development of the Cape's literary culture. This section also examines literary reviews of George Eliot and Anthony Trollope's work in order to investigate colonial reactions to both authors.

Whilst Chapters One and Two focus on the moral and intellectual aspects of literary colonialism, Chapter Three is concerned with the systematic practicalities of colonialism, focalised through the postal system. In this thesis, the domestic and international mail system functions as the

⁷² Roderick Noble, 'Introduction', *Cape Monthly Magazine*, July 1870, pp. 1 - 2.

colonial institution which knits both of my authors to each other, as well as to the Cape Colony. Anthony Trollope and George Eliot are linked through the Post Office because Trollope helped Charles Lewes to secure a job with the Post Office in England in the 1860's. Trollope's role as a postal inspector also gave him the authority to become a gentlemanly 'tourist-inspector' after he retired from the Post Office and started visiting and writing about Britain's settlement colonies (Henderson, p.1). This chapter asks how the postal service was complicit in aiding the expansion of imperial power throughout the South African colonies, and considers what Trollope's influence was upon the functioning of the postal service. I argue that the postal system in South Africa advanced the spread of Trollope's influence as a high-ranking postal official, both by transporting him physically through the colony, and by giving him the means to 'inspect' and comment upon life in colonial South Africa. However, although Trollope's narrative in *South Africa* reveals the increasing influence of British culture on the colony, it also reveals lapses in propriety and gaps in the system which put the network under strain. These lapses consequently put the success of Trollope's bureaucratic vision of power-consolidation in South Africa in danger of failing. This project is interested in exploring those gaps and interstices, as they uncover the instabilities attendant to colonial belonging in South Africa.

1. George Eliot and the South African Public Library

The National Library of South Africa in Cape Town is situated at the end of a long avenue of oak trees in a public garden at the foot of Table Mountain. It still occupies the purpose-built structure erected for it in the late 1850's, and opened by Prince Alfred in 1860.⁷³ Centrally-situated within Cape Town's cultural and civic hub, the Library was an expression of the English colonists' metropolitan aspirations and pretensions. The Library's entanglement with the other intellectual institutions in the Cape allowed it to influence the development of the colony's English literary culture. In this chapter I argue that the Library participated in the anglicisation of the Cape Colony through the imposition of English metropolitan standards of readership behaviour. Much like metropolitan libraries, 'the material arrangements of the library (its spaces, catalogues and rules) worked to shape the ways in which readers reacted to its texts'.⁷⁴ The Library committee regulated and dictated the terms of the population's readership – when they would be able to access the books, how much they would pay for that access, and what kinds of books that they would be encouraged to read.

This chapter argues that the Cape colonists used literature to try to shape their community into one of 'ideal' colonists – morally upright, well-educated individuals, able to conduct themselves in a civilised manner. The questions about how to shape 'good' colonists cohered around the South African Public Library, as it was the institution which would sustain good colonialism through its emulation of metropolitan practices and its steady, if somewhat out of date, supply of literary and cultural materials from England. The act of reading is therefore implicated in the moral advancement and civilisation of the colony, both as a self-improving activity in itself, and as a means to access the elevating content of the books and periodicals that were available in the Library. As this chapter will demonstrate, the books that the Library stocked were central to debates about its function in the colony. The colonists took George Eliot as an exemplar of a 'good' author, because of the moral and

⁷³ 'The Public Library, Cape Town', *Cape Monthly Magazine*, August 1861, pp. 91 - 99.

⁷⁴ Beth Palmer, "'A Journey Round the Bookshelves': Reading in the Royal Colonial Institute", in *A Return to the Common Reader: Print Culture and the Novel, 1850-1900*, ed. by Beth Palmer and Adelene Buckland, (Farnham, Surrey: Ashgate, 2011), pp. 133 - 149 (p. 135).

didactic nature of her writing. This chapter draws a parallel between Eliot's emphasis on the development of good moral character, both in her literary reviews and in her fiction, and the Cape colonists' desire to mould a colony of 'good' colonists. Descriptions of reading, both in the minutes of the meetings of the South African Public Library and in the local press will be compared to Eliot's descriptions of reading in one of her more popular novels amongst the colonists in the Cape, *The Mill on the Floss*, in order to extrapolate influence that literature can play in the development of a person of good moral character.

Nancy Henry argues that Eliot's books provided British colonists with 'a nostalgic vision of England as well as a connection to the latest contemporary fiction' (Henry, *Commonwealth*, p.2). Whilst they certainly may have evoked sentimental emotions amongst her readers in the Cape, I expand upon Henry's argument by suggesting that Eliot's books and journal articles also helped to impose white English standards of literary production upon the Cape Colony. As a result, Eliot's cultural capital, as a writer of 'serious' literature, becomes complicit in the anglicisation of the Cape. Furthermore, I demonstrate how the Cape's cultural institutions viewed literature as an integral role-player in the development of the colony's national consciousness and identity. Thus rather than prompting the colonists to look back to England, Eliot's books helped them to articulate their desires for the future, and to the development of a national literature, distinct and unique to the Cape Colony.

The South African Public Library was modelled on the great metropolitan libraries of Europe. The Library committee made constant comparisons between the South African Public Library and libraries in London and other European capitals, as well as inter-colonial comparisons with Australian and Indian Libraries. In 1876, at a meeting of the subscribers to the South African Public Library, the committee likened its importance to the National Library at the British Museum.⁷⁵ It was thus imagined as an extension of the metropole, stocked with the latest English literary arrivals and run according to familiar metropolitan rules and regulations. This institutional familiarity aided colonial

⁷⁵ 'Report', in *Proceedings at the Forty-seventh Anniversary Meeting of the Subscribers to the Public Library, Cape Town, Cape of Good Hope*, (Cape Town: Saul Solomon and Co, 1876), pp. 3 - 12 (p. 6).

expansion, as English emigrants to South Africa were able to orientate themselves to their new setting. For Bertie Lewes, in 1866, this meant seeing his parents' books and periodicals in the library. That being said, Bertie's experience must also have been surreal, confronting the familiarity of his parents' literary productions in a colonial library, in an unfamiliar town, after having spent weeks at sea. The Library's meaning to emigrants such as Bertie Lewes would thus have been binary, being both familiar and alien, and creating a sense of unsettlement amongst these new colonial settlers.

Eliot's virtual participation in the colonisation of South Africa was two-fold, as her books' cultural colonisation of South Africa was supplemented by the physical occupation of the land by her stepsons. This chapter explores the dual aspects of Eliot's colonisation of South Africa, both literal and literary, in order to assess the impact that her exports of human and cultural capital had upon the Cape Colony. It asks how Eliot's contribution to South Africa's cultural and intellectual development compares to the impact that her stepsons had in the colony, and explores the anxiety that she shared with the South African Public Library about the moral and ethical implications of British settlement in South Africa.

'Terra incognita': Eliot and Africa

George Eliot had two sets of children. Her stepsons, Charles, Thornton and Herbert Lewes were acquired through her relationship with their father, George Henry Lewes. Her other offspring were her books, which she and her friends referred to as her 'children', and which were carefully marketed for colonial consumption.⁷⁶ Leah Price demonstrates that Eliot's books were bound in deliberately gaudy covers, to appeal to a 'colonial class' of reader.⁷⁷ Whilst her book-children participated in the literary colonisation of the Cape Colony by lining the shelves of the South African Public Library, Eliot's human-children participated in the physical colonisation of South Africa by settling there in

⁷⁶ Rosemarie Bodenheimer notes that Eliot and Lewes began to use the metaphor of Eliot's books as her children in 1859, when her role as stepmother to the Lewes boys began in earnest. (Bodenheimer, p. 202 and 230.)

⁷⁷ Leah Price, 'George Eliot and the Production of Consumers', *Novel: A Forum on Fiction*, 30. 2 (1997), pp. 145-169 (p. 153).

the 1860's. However the boys were not prepared for colonial markets in the same way as Eliot's books. This section explores the trajectory of Thornie and Bertie Lewes's colonial careers in order to assess how they compare to those of her books in a later section. Despite having never visited South Africa, Eliot and Lewes sent their two younger sons there. This section explores how Eliot and Lewes came to the decision to export their sons. I start by exploring how Eliot and Lewes imagined Africa and Africans, and chart the events that lead to Thornie and Bertie Lewes becoming Africans themselves.

Imagining Africa

George Eliot and George Henry Lewes were able to construct intellectual and imaginative visions of Africa because of their roles as reviewers of contemporary literature in the 1850's, their access to human and animal displays in London, and through letters from their friend, Barbara Bodichon. This section will suggest that their intellectual familiarity with Africa supported the Lewes's decision to send Thornton and Herbert to South Africa in the 1860's.⁷⁸ However, their descriptions of Africa's landscape, animals, and people show a marked ambivalence toward the continent that would later be settled by their children. This anxiety about the moral effects of colonial settlement heightens the importance of books and culture as aids to achieving a higher level of civilisation in South Africa.

As the editor of the *Westminster Review*, George Eliot analysed a number of accounts of travel and exploration in Africa, as well as in Australia, Tasmania, New Zealand and the Arctic.⁷⁹ George Henry Lewes also demonstrated an interest in colonial travel literature, reviewing David Livingstone's *Missionary Travels and Researches in South Africa* in the *Westminster Review* and condemning Roualeyn

⁷⁸ Eliot took George Henry Lewes's surname in her correspondence, asking Bessie Parks to address her as Mrs Lewes, and so for ease of reference, when talking about Eliot and Lewes as a couple, I will refer to them as the Leweses. *The George Eliot Letters*, ed. by Gordon Sherman Haight, 9 vols (London: Oxford University Press, 1954), II, pp. 379 - 380.

⁷⁹ George Eliot, 'History, Biography, Voyages and Travels', *Westminster Review*, October 1856, pp. 553 - 566 (p. 553). George Eliot, 'History, Biography, Voyages and Travels', *Westminster Review*, January 1857, pp. 288 - 306 (p. 305).

Gordon-Cumming's *Five Years of a Hunter's Life in the Far Interior of South Africa* in the *Leader*.⁸⁰ He would also read Anthony Trollope's *South Africa* when it was published in 1878 (Henry, *British Empire*, p.61). An analysis of Eliot's and Lewes's reviews of colonial travel literature demonstrates how they imagined Africa, the British explorers who explored the continent, and the indigenous people who lived there.

In Eliot's review of Nathan Davis's *Evenings in my Tent* in the *Leader* in April 1854, the whole continent of Africa is collectively described as a 'terra incognita', which swallows British explorers and leads them to an anticipated 'destruction'.⁸¹ North Africa remains imbued with the romance and exoticism of Eliot's childhood familiarity with the *Arabian Nights*, which seeps into her visions of Africa's landscapes:

[...] the dreary, infinite desert, tree-less, water-less – of the magical mirage, – of vast rivers whose birth and whose ending was alike a mystery, of beautiful, dreadful wild beasts, the kings and princes of these wide domains (p.330).

For Eliot, Africa, and North Africa in particular, remains the site of her juvenile imaginings, with vast, sparsely populated landscapes, which consume unwary British explorers.

In addition to the impersonal accounts of the African landscape that Eliot and Lewes encountered in the books that they read, they also had some more in-depth exposure to North Africa through their correspondence with Barbara Leigh Smith Bodichon. Eliot first met Bodichon in June 1852 and they grew to become close friends (*Eliot Letters*, II, pp. 39 – 40). In October 1856 Bodichon went to Algiers with her family where she met her future husband, Eugene Bodichon, a French doctor (*Eliot Letters*, II, p.267). They were married in July 1857, and thereafter Bodichon divided her time between North Africa and England.⁸² Bodichon's correspondence with Eliot from Algiers provided Eliot with a more intimate appraisal of life in North Africa. In April 1857, Eliot told her friend Sara Hennell that:

⁸⁰ George Henry Lewes, 'African Life', *Westminster Review*, January 1858, pp. 1 - 28. George Henry Lewes, 'The Lion Hunter', *Leader*, 27 July 1850, pp. 423 - 424.

⁸¹ George Eliot, 'Evenings in My Tent', *Leader*, 8 April 1854, pp. 330 - 331 (p. 330).

⁸² Pam Hirsch, 'Bodichon, Barbara Leigh Smith (1827–1891)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004, <<http://0-www.oxforddnb.com.catalogue.oxford.ac.uk/view/article/2755>> [accessed 18 June 2015].

We have wonderful descriptions from Barbara Smith of the glorious scenery and strange picturesque life she finds in Algiers. It really seems an easy way of bringing the tropics near to one's imagination, to take that short journey. In less than a week's easy travelling you are among palms and Arabs and wild horses and lions and panthers, and I don't know what beside. She dashes down sketches with her pen and ink, making arrow-heads to indicate the bark of Jackals! (*Eliot Letters*, II, p.320).

Once again, Eliot seems taken with the romance and adventure in Bodichon's descriptions, and finds it thrilling that Algeria's exotic scenery and wildness is only a week's travel away. Bodichon's images of Algiers certainly seem delightful, captured with the eye of an artist:

The weather is so beautiful now and the white iris in our garden at sunrise (500 of them) are more beautiful than angels. There you see a long troop -- over their heads the blue sea and over and beyond and afar from that the peaks of pure snow or rather rock ice, pure as the white iris, are glowing in rosey light yet the colour of these mountains is purer and more marvellous. Such a delicious melody of colour it is (*Eliot Letters*, VIII, p.231).

In this second description, Algiers's natural beauty has become domesticated, as this view is taken from Bodichon's garden. Bodichon's letters capture Eliot's imagination, and she appreciates the realism of the images Bodichon sends her:

This evening, however, I have been reading your description of Algiers and the desire to thank you for it moves me too strongly to be resisted. It is admirably written and makes me *see* the country. I am so glad to think of the deep draughts of life you get from being able to spend half your year in that fresh, grand scenery. It must make London and English green fields all the more enjoyable in their turn.⁸³

Along with providing Eliot with clear images of Africa, Bodichon's descriptions also encourage a fresh appreciation of the familiar English landscape. Bodichon's letters helped to make Northern Africa less alien and more accessible to Eliot and Lewes, and created contrasting images of wild exoticism and domestic beauty. Bodichon's letters transformed the 'dreadful beasts' of Eliot's earlier representations into benign images of accessible and domesticated exoticism.

The romanticism that Eliot associated with the African landscape is also apparent in her descriptions of British travellers to the southern hemisphere in some of her articles in the *Westminster Review*. Explorers are complimented for their bravery, but they are also expected to balance the invigorating properties of travel with descriptive accuracy. In October 1856 Eliot reviewed C.J. Anderson's *Lake Ngami* and Richard Burton's *First Footsteps in East Africa* in the *Westminster Review*

⁸³ George Eliot to Barbara Bodichon, 5 September 1860, in *The George Eliot Letters*, ed. by Gordon Sherman Haight, 9 vols (London: Oxford University Press, 1954), III, p. 342.

(Eliot, 'History', October 1856, pp.562 – 563).⁸⁴ In the article, she commends Anderson for being a 'dashing adventurer', and delights in his descriptions, which are couched in 'plain, straightforward language'. Her review of Burton's book also emphasises the adventurousness of his expedition through present-day Somalia. However, his verbose writing style frustrates Eliot. She complains that 'the subject is new, we are full of curiosity to learn about it, but we are hungry, and are not fed, we are thirsty, and find no drink [...]'. Eliot found Burton's book boring, and she criticises him for including 'neither anecdote to make it lively, nor thought to make it rich'. What had promised to be an exciting tale of disguise, espionage and adventurous dealings with murderous tribes is undermined by Burton's 'loose and undigested' writing style (Eliot, 'History', Oct 1856, p.563). Thus in addition to embodying the British adventurousness and bravery abroad, explorers were also subject to Eliot's literary demands, and were expected to bring useful information back to England, presented in an interesting and descriptively accurate narrative.

George Henry Lewes's expectations of British explorers in Africa were broadly similar to Eliot's, and his reviews of travel and exploration literature reveal that he was particularly concerned with the moral implications of visiting the colonies. In 1850 Lewes expressed horror at Roualeyn Gordon Cummings's *Five Years of a Hunter's Life in the Far Interior of South Africa*. From his opening line, Lewes states his position bluntly, calling the book 'brutal' (Lewes, 'Lion Hunter', p.423). Lewes is outraged at the cruelty with which Cummings kills his prey:

Our sense of courage, hardihood, adventure, is lost in that of butchery [...] the page reeks with blood; and the writer smears himself all over with it as if the blood itself were ornamental! (p.423).

Cummings and his style of writing are associated with a barbarity so intense that his literary output is contaminated and devalued. By characterising the British hunter as a savage, smeared in his victim's blood, Lewes displays concern about the degenerative behaviour of the British traveller overseas. John Mackenzie suggests that Cummings's brutality was heightened for his metropolitan readers

⁸⁴ Henry attributes this article to Eliot. This is not supported by 'Authenticated Essays and Reviews', in *George Eliot: A Bibliographical History*, ed. by William Baker and John C. Ross, (London: British Library, 2002), pp. 429 - 438). However, the style of writing in this article is very similar to the other 'Belles Lettres' articles that Eliot wrote during the same period, and so I am inclined to agree with this attribution.

because he ‘flouted’ the unspoken rules of gentlemanly sportsmanship.⁸⁵ Mackenzie argues that since the times of ancient Greece and Rome, hunting for sport has been associated with society’s elite, and elaborate rules about where, when and what may be hunted have taken shape over time (Mackenzie, p.8). By the nineteenth century, even a middle-management bureaucrat like Anthony Trollope could feel that he passed as a ‘squire, to the manor born’ when participating in the hunt.⁸⁶ However, Cummings subverted the polite and gentlemanly rules of the hunt by killing more animals than his retinue could eat, firing into herds without targeting a particular animal, and shooting to lame rather than kill (Mackenzie, p.98). For Lewes, Cummings’s revelry in the destruction and suffering of animals brings his ‘manliness’ and humanity into question, as he is reduced to an unthinking brute, a ‘hunting machine’ (Lewes, ‘Lion Hunter’, p.423 – 424). British adventurousness in Africa, which Eliot found so admirable in her reviews, has been corrupted in Cummings’s account of his exploits in Southern Africa. For Lewes, like Eliot, natural history and adventure are interlinked, and an expedition which overemphasises destructive behaviour at the expense of scientific discoveries is a poor one. Rather than bringing civilisation and scientific classification to Africa, Cummings has descended into the realm of savage brutality. His English traits of adventurousness, gentility and courage have become grotesquely subverted, as intellectual discovery takes second place to blood sports.

Six years after this tirade against *Five Years of a Hunter’s Life*, Lewes reviewed Jules Gérard’s books about lion hunting in North Africa.⁸⁷ In comparison to Cummings’s monotonous, blood-splattered stories of slaughter, Lewes claims that Gérard writes with ‘fascinating interest’ about his close observations of lions in their natural habitat:

Had naturalists studied this majestic animal in the mountain gorges from twilight to dawn [...] in a word, had they watched him, as Gérard has, rifle in hand, lonely, with the intense eagerness of a hunter whose life depends upon his minutest observation being accurate, we should have another conception of the lion from that to be derived by a study of books or an inspection of menageries (Lewes, ‘Lions and Lion Hunting’, p.206).

⁸⁵ John M. Mackenzie, *The Empire of Nature: Hunting, Conservation and British Imperialism*, (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1988), p. 98.

⁸⁶ Anthony Trollope, *An Autobiography*, 2 vols (Edinburgh; London: William Blackwood and Sons, 1883), I, p. 228.

⁸⁷ George Henry Lewes, ‘Lions and Lion Hunting’, *Westminster Review*, January 1856, pp. 205 - 217 (p. 216).

Gérard's careful descriptions offer more insight to the reader than Cummings's, and as a result make a valuable contribution to the study of natural history. The accounts of lion hunting in his book are therefore justified by the scientific knowledge to be gained from his experiences, and his adventurousness has been tempered with intellectual civility and gentlemanly sportsmanship. Lewes's differing attitudes toward Cummings and Gérard draws attention to the extremes in behaviour that British travellers to South Africa could take. They either became barbarous and destructive or they engaged with the natural world in a considered and intellectual manner. The pursuit of knowledge checks a hunter's degeneration into a savage.

In the passage quoted above, Lewes does not acknowledge the irony that his own knowledge of lions was gleaned from reading books such as Gérard's and Cummings's, and from visiting the lion enclosure at the Zoological Gardens in Regent's Park, where he was Fellow.⁸⁸ In her study of the taxonomical principles which structured the animal displays and arrangements at the Zoological Gardens at Regent's Park, Harriet Ritvo notes that 'the most powerful visual expression of the human domination of nature was the sight of large carnivores in cages'.⁸⁹ She argues that the Zoological Gardens in London were an expression of Britain's dominance over the natural world, and that the size and the breadth of its collection also advertised the 'preeminence of [British] social and professional elitism [sic]' (pp.46 – 47). More recently, Helen Cowie has built on Ritvo's work by exploring how British people reacted to the rare and exotic animals that they encountered in zoos and

⁸⁸ Rosemary Ashton, *G.H. Lewes: An Unconventional Victorian*, (London: Pimlico, 2000), p. 172 and 217. Eliot first mentions visiting the Zoological Gardens in September 1856. The couple continued to visit regularly (approximately once a month during 1861) until the end of 1863 when they moved from Blandford Square to The Priory. Presumably they must have visited the lions prior to the September 1856 visit, but Eliot's journals only begin in 1854 and are not continuous, and Lewes's journals remain unpublished. (Eliot, various journal entries from September 1856 – November 1863, George Eliot, *The Journals of George Eliot*, ed. by Margaret Harris and Judith Johnston, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), pp. 63 and 101 - 119.), hereafter referred to in in-text citations as '*Journals*'.

⁸⁹ Harriet Ritvo, 'The Order of Nature: Constructing the Collections of Victorian Zoos', in *New Worlds, New Animals: From Menagerie to Zoological Park in the Nineteenth Century*, ed. by R.J. Hoage and William A. Deiss, (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996), pp. 43 - 50 (p. 47). See also Robert W. Jones, "'The Sight of Creatures Strange to Our Clime': London Zoo and the Consumption of the Exotic", *Journal of Victorian Culture*, 2. 1 (1997), pp. 1 - 26.

menageries.⁹⁰ Like Ritvo, Cowie suggests that animal displays ‘functioned as tangible symbols of Britain’s imperial reach’ (p.86). She explores the link between imperialism and British zoos by examining the logistics behind the acquisition and transportation of new animals for zoological exhibits. Cowie claims that ‘the collection of exotic species both relied upon and reflected colonial administrative structures’ (Cowie, p.10). She demonstrates that British diplomats and governors were some of the most enthusiastic collectors of specimens for zoos due to their proximity to rare and unusual species, their enjoyment of hunting for sport, and their amateur interest in natural history (p.80). Lewes and Eliot’s access to African animals in the Regent’s Park Zoological Gardens was thus facilitated by colonialism, and structured through an institution that positioned itself as a representative of British imperial might and power. Viewed through the imperialist and nationalist knowledge structures of the Zoological Gardens, British colonialism appears successful, as the natural world has been conquered and caged.

The culture of ‘imperial display’ extended from exhibits of caged animals to semi-theatrical shows of foreign people (Cowie, p.4). These exhibitions were a popular form of entertainment in London in the nineteenth century.⁹¹ Sadiya Qureshi demonstrates that the sheer number of these human displays, coupled with increasing levels of international migration to London meant that England’s metropolitan populations were very familiar with foreigners (Qureshi p.16). The people who featured in ethnographic shows were often colonised, and ‘had been specifically imported to perform songs, dances, and other demonstrations of their ‘singular’ nature’ (p.2). Lewes had been to see one such performance at St George’s Gallery on Hyde Park Corner in 1853, which he reported on as ‘Vivian’ in the *Leader*:

Thirteen veritable Zulus – eleven men, a woman and a child (the child engaging enough to make all mothers and fathers, putative and real, go off into small ecstasies of sympathy) – are made to represent, amid painted scenes, as on the stage, various aspects of their wild life, so that the

⁹⁰ Helen Cowie, *Exhibiting Animals in Nineteenth-Century Britain: Empathy, Education, Entertainment*, (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014).

⁹¹ Sadiya Qureshi, *Peoples on Parade: Exhibitions, Empire, and Anthropology in Nineteenth Century Britain*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2011). See also Richard Daniel Altick, *The Shows of London*, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1978); *Human Zoos: Science and Spectacle in the Age of Colonial Empires*, ed. by Pascal Blanchard, Gilles Boëtsch, and Nanette Jacomijn Snoep, (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2008).

spectator assists at a Kaffir drama at which the actors are no wretched 'supers' at one shilling a night, but the free, graceful warriors themselves, *being* what they *represent*.⁹²

Lewes's emphasis is on the authenticity of the Zulu people and their performance – they are 'veritable', 'real', and are living embodiments of 'what they represent'. However, the veracity of the representation is surely called into question by the fact that the Zulu people are presented on a stage, in front of a painted set, just as actors would be for a theatrical production. Lewes's, and by extension Eliot's, exposure to human variety in London was once again shaped by the imperial values that transported colonised peoples to London and turned them into a visual spectacle and form of entertainment. The theatricality of Lewes's encounter with the Zulu people undermines the reality of their display, and creates a stylised and unrealistic representation of African people.

Charles Dickens went to the same exhibition of Zulu warriors that Lewes had been to, and his observations of their performance formed the basis of his scathing attack on the idealised figure of the 'noble savage'.⁹³ Michael Slater notes that the concept of the 'noble savage' originated in the eighteenth century, and envisaged indigenous non-white people as morally pure because 'they have not been corrupted by civilisation'.⁹⁴ Dickens rebuts this concept, and society's 'maudlin admiration' for the 'Noble Savage':

To come to the point at once, I beg to say that I have not the least belief in the Noble Savage. I consider him a prodigious nuisance, and an enormous superstition. His calling rum fire-water, and me a pale face, wholly fail to reconcile me to him. I don't care what he calls me. I call him a savage, and I call a savage a something highly desirable to be civilised off the face of the earth. I think a mere gent (which I take to be the lowest form of civilisation) better than a howling, whistling, clucking, stamping, jumping, tearing savage (Dickens, 'Noble Savage', p.337).

Instead of associating savagery with uncorrupted moral purity, Dickens characterises indigenous people as violent, superstitious and animalistic.⁹⁵ In an African context, the new colonial territory of

⁹² George Henry Lewes, 'The Zulu Kaffirs', *Leader*, 21 May 1853, p. 502. He also commented on the 'representation' of the Zulu people, again calling the veracity of the display into question.

⁹³ Charles Dickens, 'The Noble Savage', *Household Words*, 11 June 1853, pp. 337 - 339.

⁹⁴ Michael Slater, 'Header' to Charles Dickens, 'The Noble Savage', in *The Dent Uniform Edition of Dickens' Journalism: 'Gone Astray' and Other Papers from Household Words, 1851-59*, ed. by Michael Slater, 4 vols (London: Dent, [1853] 1998) III, pp. 141 - 148.

⁹⁵ Altick suggests that Dickens' vehement criticism of the 'Noble Savage' was in part due to his feeling that public sympathy had been misdirected toward the people that partook in ethnographic displays, when it should have been focussed the English urban poor that were in need of charity and sympathy (Altick, *Shows of London*, p.283).

South Africa is peopled with 'savages', who need to be 'civilised' or exterminated by their British rulers.

Lewes's conceptualisation of the 'wildness' and 'primitive' nature of African life in his article about the exhibition of Zulu people is repeated in his and Eliot's depictions of the Africans that they read about in the books that they review for the *Westminster Review* and the *Leader*. Eliot's analysis of Davis's *Evenings in my Tent* describes how the 'lofty, generous' North African Arabs of her childhood imagination have been transformed into 'cunning, rapacious, and cowardly' degenerates as a result of her adult reading (Eliot, 'Evenings', p.330). When recounting Burton's experiences on his journey from Berbera to Harar, Eliot characterises the Somali people of East Africa as 'murderous' tribes of 'half-barbarous [...] bastard Bedouins' who prey upon the stranded crews of wrecked British ships. To begin negotiating with them, Burton had to meet the Emir of Harar who Eliot describes as having a '[...] bad reputation. His den was like the lion's in the fable; the footprints of travellers in that direction pointed all one way – approach to Harar was easy – escape from it not so easy' (Eliot, 'History', Oct 1856, p.564). Once again, Eliot frames her response to Africa through the fables and stories of childhood and this extends to her representations of Africans. The Arabs of Northern Africa remain associated with the mysticism, sensuality and 'magic' of the *Arabian Nights*, whilst the East African Somalis were characterised by their animalistic traits of murderousness and savagery.

Lewes's conception of Africans in his literary reviews is closely aligned to Eliot's. He also characterises the Arabs of North Africa by their 'barbarian aspects of sensuality, lying and fanaticism [...]'.⁹⁶ When describing the East Africans that Richard Burton encounters in *The Lake Regions of Central Africa*, Lewes also emphasises their superstitious nature.⁹⁷ However, whilst he reproduces Burton's observations that the Somali people of western Africa rely on the powers of witch doctors and rain doctors, Lewes also contradicts Burton's criticism that they are uncaring parents by observing that the explorer is 'harsh and ungenerous in his judgements' at times (p.29). Nevertheless,

⁹⁶ George Henry Lewes, 'Life in Central Africa', *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine*, April 1861, pp. 440 - 453 (p. 330).

⁹⁷ George Henry Lewes, 'Uncivilised Man', *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine*, January 1861, pp. 27 - 41 (p. 36).

Lewes persists in calling both east and west Africans uncivilised ‘savages’ and observes that they are deceitful out of habit (p.33 – 34).

Lewes does, however, make occasional allowances for individuality amongst African people, as his review of David Livingstone’s *Missionary Travels and Researches in South Africa* demonstrates. Noting the moral, cultural and physical diversity of southern Africans, he writes:

Some are warlike and marauding, others peaceful and agricultural, but all are unequivocally endowed with the same faculties and tendencies, and in the same degree, as Europeans. In intelligence they certainly equal that of any race known to us [...] In virtue, they seem like the rest of the world, of a mingled yarn, good and evil, generosity and egoism (Lewes, ‘African Life’, p.13).

Despite their savagery and uncivilised nature, Lewes believes that Africans are capable of European levels of intellectualism. They are just ‘further off’ from its attainment than Europeans (Lewes, ‘Uncivilised Man’, p.41). Lewes’s opinions here reflect the milder contemporaneous ethnographical opinions at the time. Theorists who took a Lamarckian approach to evolution, and assumed that traits acquired during one’s lifetime could be passed to one’s offspring, believed that ‘dark-skinned savages could, over time, eliminate savagery [...] not by destroying savage populations, but by modifying their hereditary incapacity’ (Stocking, p.237). Brenda McKay suggests that Eliot’s and Lewes’s writings demonstrate their rejection of theories of rigid racial determination which were put forward by theorists like Robert Knox and James Hunt.⁹⁸ So-called polygenists theorised that modern humans descended from separate races, and as a result, were in fact different species. They ranked the species in a hierarchical manner, with white people at the top. In contrast, monogenist thinkers such as Charles Darwin believed that humans shared a common ancestor. McKay demonstrates that Eliot and Lewes favoured a combination of monogenist and evolutionary thinking, mixed with a dash of polygenism:

[...] George Eliot, like Darwin and Wallace, was caught in somewhat contradictory race discourses [...] For George Eliot, the benign, egalitarian aspects of the hypothesis that humanity had a common ancestor, seemingly backed up by the authority of science, were the most appealing because [it was] consistent with tolerance and liberation. On the other hand, the more moderate aspects of polygenism were acceptable because these took account of human difference (McKay, p.103).

⁹⁸ Brenda McKay, *George Eliot and Victorian Attitudes to Racial Diversity, Colonialism, Darwinism, Class, Gender, and Jewish Culture and Prophecy*, (Lewiston: Edwin Mellen Press, 2003).

Thus although Lewes demonstrates racialised thinking in his reviews of African travel and exploration literature, his attitude is not wholeheartedly prejudiced, as he allows for individuality and nascent intellectuality amongst Africans.

The Lewes's exposure to African exploration literature and ethnographic entertainments in London influenced their responses to the African landscape, people and animals that their sons would later experience first-hand. Their visits to Regent's Park Zoological Gardens and exhibitions of human displays were framed within imperial and colonial power structures, which aimed at promoting British authority over foreign territory, people and knowledge. These experiences influenced the Leweses' journalistic articles, in which they display their racial assumptions, and the limits of their knowledge about Africa. Africa is an imaginary canvas on which the couple project their romanticised visions of the land and the people that inhabit it. British explorers and missionaries are expected to 'subdue savages' whilst remaining uncontaminated, and retaining their gentlemanly characteristics of bravery and civility (Lewes, 'Life in Central Africa, p.440). In contrast, Eliot's and Lewes's conception of African people is decidedly less positive, as they depict the Arabs of North Africa as treacherous and cunning, whilst the Africans of central and southern Africa remain savages. Their potential to attain European standards of intellectual development is acknowledged, but this moment is brief in an otherwise wide range of texts in which Eliot and Lewes display their stereotypical assumptions about people they have never met, in a continent that they would never visit. Barbara Bodichon's letters added a layer of intimacy to their imaginings of Africa, although they reinforced the romance and exoticism of northern Africa, and perhaps created unrealistic expectations for their sons' potential experiences as colonists in Africa. Throughout Eliot and Lewes's articles there is an underlying anxiety that Africa is a site of moral compromise for British visitors, which can only be eased by the cultivation of the 'civilised' habits of intellectual inquiry and study.

Colonising Africa

If Eliot and Lewes perceived Africa as an untamed land which had such malign potential to influence British travellers, one has to wonder how the decision was made to send the two younger Lewes boys, Thornton and Herbert, to colonise South Africa. The answer is partly to do with the boys' attributes and abilities, as well as the ambient attitude toward colonial migration at the time. Like many of their literary contemporaries, Eliot and Lewes were at the mercy of what Patrick Dunae calls the 'younger son question'.⁹⁹ The demise of the patronage system in the civil service, combined with an overabundance of well-educated boys and a limited number of employment positions suited to young gentleman caused concern about how to employ this ever-expanding group of young men. Some chose to attempt the competitive examination process in order to qualify as civil servants, whilst others attempted to establish themselves independently in the British colonies of South Africa, Australia and New South Wales (Henry, *British Empire*, p.42).¹⁰⁰ This was the solution that Eliot and Lewes would eventually decide upon for their two youngest boys, Thornton and Herbert.

Their experiences would not be atypical. In a collection of essays titled *Settlers and Expatriates: Britons over the Seas*, Robert Bickers notes that British migration to the colonies encompassed a large variety of settlers – those in the military, as well as:

[...] non-officials and unofficials, traders, planters, men and women in the professions, and in service trades, state functionaries at all levels – police, public works and health, customs, merchant marine, railways [...] entrepreneurs who filled the remaining gaps – journalists and hoteliers, for example – all of these together formed significant populations of their own.¹⁰¹

Gary Magee and Andrew Thompson also note the mobility of professional people across the empire, because of the transferability of their skills and abilities (Magee and Thompson, p.137). This vast population of civil servants, professionals and entrepreneurs, who supported and widened the frontiers of the empire would also be made up of the sons of Lewes and Eliot's literary peers. Charles

⁹⁹ Patrick A. Dunae, 'Education, Emigration and Empire: The Colonial College 1887 – 1905', in *'Benefits Bestowed?': Education and British Imperialism*, ed. by J. A. Mangan, (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1988), pp. 193 - 210 (p. 196).

¹⁰⁰ See also Nancy Henry, *The Life of George Eliot: A Critical Biography*, (Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, 2012), pp. 158 - 159.

¹⁰¹ Robert A. Bickers, 'Introduction', in *Settlers and Expatriates: Britons over the Seas*, ed. by Robert A. Bickers, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), pp. 1 - 18 (p. 1).

Dickens's second son, Walter, was awarded a cadetship in the East India Company in 1857 and his brother Francis obtained a position in the Bengal Mounted Police in 1864. Other sons were sent abroad to make their own way in the colonies, such as Dickens's youngest son, Edward, and Anthony Trollope's son, Fred, who both emigrated to New South Wales in 1865 (Henry, *British Empire*, p.61 – 63).¹⁰² Set against this backdrop of extensive human migration to the colonies, Thornton and Bertie's individual experiences demonstrate the setbacks and insecurities attendant to the settlement of ordinary, unremarkable nineteenth-century British colonists in South Africa.

However, Eliot and Lewes's oldest son, Charles, escaped a colonial fate because of his father's friendship with Anthony Trollope. At the time, Lewes and Trollope were both contributors to the *Cornhill Magazine*, and were becoming 'most dear friends'.¹⁰³ This was facilitated, no doubt, by the gratitude that the Leweses felt toward Trollope for helping Charles to secure a nomination for the Post Office examinations in 1860 (Ashton, *Lewes*, p.209). In her diaries, Eliot professed herself to be:

[...] full of anxiety and trembling hope just now about Charley who is preparing to pass a competitive examination for a supplementary clerkship in the Secretary's Department of the Post Office, the nomination having been kindly procured for him by Mr Anthony Trollope (*Journals*, p.86).

When Charles passed the exam with the top grades, Trollope passed on his congratulations in a letter to Lewes, and commended Charles's choice in the Service.¹⁰⁴ Through Trollope's assistance, Charles Lewes was established within a respectable metropolitan career with prospects for promotion and long-term employment.

In contrast to the relative ease with which Charles was set up with professional employment, Thornton and Herbert were to prove more of a challenge. This was partly a result of their personal attributes. Thornton (Thornie) was a boisterous and noisy young man, who Eliot referred to as 'Sturm und Drang' in a letter to John Blackwood (*Eliot Letters*, VIII, p.290). His school career at Hofwyl in Switzerland was punctuated with alarms and scrapes. In 1860 alone, Thornie asked to be

¹⁰² Mary Lazarus, *A Tale of Two Brothers*, (Sydney: Angus and Robertson, 1973). Grahame Smith, 'Suppressing Narratives: Childhood and Empire in *The Uncommercial Traveller* and *Great Expectations*', in *Dickens and the Children of Empire* ed. by Wendy S. Jacobson, (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2000), pp. 43 - 53. Hall, p. 333.

¹⁰³ Anthony Trollope, 'George Henry Lewes', *Fortnightly Review*, January 1879, pp. 15 - 24 (p. 15).

¹⁰⁴ Anthony Trollope to G. H. Lewes, 9 August 1860, in Anthony Trollope, *The Letters of Anthony Trollope*, ed. by N. John Hall and Nina Burgis, 2 vols (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1983), I, pp. 117 - 118.

allowed to reveal Eliot's identity as the author of *Adam Bede* to a school mate and requested permission to have a gun at school in order to further his interest in taxidermy. Both requests were declined (*Eliot Letters*, III, p.274 and *Eliot Letters*, VIII, p.259, 260, 264 and 266). His presence at home during school holidays was disruptive, as Lewes and Eliot began to 'have a general impression that life is made up of large boys with robust voices and bright spirits' (*Eliot Letters*, IV, p.46). Thornie's temperament seems to have been volatile, as Eliot described him as 'at once amiable and troublesome, easy and difficult to manage [...]' during one of his visits home in 1863 (*Eliot Letters*, IV, p.117). This volatility and tendency toward impulsiveness would have a negative impact on Thornie's attempts to find employment as a professional gentleman after he finished high school.

Whilst Thornie's boisterousness made him a frequent feature of Eliot and Lewes's letters to their friends, Herbert (Bertie) was a lot less frequently mentioned. In 1856, his father described him to a friend as educationally 'backward' because he had missed a lot of early schooling due to poor health (*Eliot Letters*, VIII, p.153). Bertie's low levels of English literacy can be seen in one of his letters home to Eliot from Hofwyl:

Dear Mother I orfan think of you when I take out my knife to cut anything. I long to come to England again, it is 3 jearys that I have not seen England (*Eliot Letters*, VIII, p.252 – 253).

Bertie's poor grasp of spelling seems to inadvertently indicate his sense of abandonment in Switzerland, as 'often' has been transformed into 'orfan' – orphan. Unfortunately for Bertie, this would not be the last time that he was left to fend for himself, as his educational limitations would lead him to try, unsuccessfully, for a career in the colonies.

Bertie's educational difficulties were exacerbated by the confusion resulting from being educated in French and German at school in Switzerland. In fact, all three boys suffered adverse effects from not being instructed in their mother tongue. When Charles was passed over for promotion during his first years working for the Post Office, Trollope discovered that it was because he was 'more au fait in French and German than he is in English' (*Trollope Letters*, I, p.181 – 182). Likewise, when Thornie finished school at Hofwyl in 1860, Eliot and Lewes decided to enrol him in a high school in Edinburgh because 'a boy whose intelligence is really more cultivated than that of the average, is still under a disadvantage in his native country, if native words and practices are not the readiest to him' (*Eliot Letters*, III, p.347). Eliot and Lewes had hoped that Thornie's difficulties with

the English language could be rectified in order for him to join the ranks of the civil servants, like his brother Charles. The intention was for him to embark on a career in the colonies as an employee of the East India Company.

As Nancy Henry points out, gaining a position within the Civil Service was viewed with a certain amount of stigma in the late 1850's. The elitist patronage system of the previous era had been replaced by a more democratic procedure of competitive examination, as part of the reform of the East India Company (Henry, *British Empire*, p.45). While commentators like Trollope noted that the termination of the patronage system was necessary to prevent political influence over the Civil Service, the competitive exam which replaced it was perceived to be flawed (Trollope, *Autobiography*, I, p. 52). In his opinion, boys applying to the Civil Service 'crammed' the information that they needed for the test, but the information they learned had 'no connection whatever to education' (p.50). Trollope also articulated a class-based concern about the exam, arguing that employment in the Civil Service required 'gentle culture', and the attributes of a gentleman. While a butcher's son may be able to acquire these qualities, they are more likely to be found in the son of a parson, and the competitive exam's defect was that it assumed that there was no difference between the two (pp.53 – 54). Of course, the Lewes boys were closer in social status to the son of a parson than a butcher. Nevertheless, Trollope wrote to Lewes to reassure him of the gentility of Charles's new position at the Post Office:

Don't let him begin life with any idea that his profession is inferior to others. Men may live as vegetables, or worse again as dead sticks, in the Civil Service. But they may, & so many do, in the church & as lawyers. But in the Civil Service, now a days, exertion will give a man a decent gentleman's income not too late in life (*Trollope Letters*, I, p.118).

Thus, despite the negative connotations attached to working for the Civil Service, Trollope championed it as a 'gentleman's' profession, which happened to have become more accessible to the likes of the Lewes boys after the demise of the patronage system.

Trollope's class-based anxiety about the Civil Service entrance exam was also apparent in letters and newspaper articles that were contemporaneous to the debate. Sir William Kaye's 'The

Indian Civil Service: Its Rise and Fall', appeared in two parts in *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine*, and opposed the reforms.¹⁰⁵ Kaye lamented the fact that the Indian Civil Service:

[...] has few attractions for men before whom anything like a brilliant European prospect lies or appears to lie [...] The men who go in for the Indian Civil Service, under the competition system, are for the most part men who neither have, nor think that they have any brilliant prospects at home, and who are content to earn a competence, isolated and forgotten, in a remote Eastern settlement, rather than to incur the risk of being utterly beaten in the great battle of life at home [...] ('Civil Service: Part II', p.273).

For Kaye, the Indian Civil Service had been transformed into a repository for young men who were unable to support themselves in England.

Commentators in the Cape Colony, however, had a more egalitarian view of the debate. A two-part article which appeared in the *Cape Monthly Magazine* in May and July 1861 appears to respond directly to Kaye's articles when it suggests, speaking of the 'industrial' type of young men likely to apply to take the Examination, that:

Surely, we cannot blame or reproach them if they seek with avidity an honourable competition for employment [...] If any reproach is merited, it is the aged men who are to blame, not the young men; it is the parents that are the sinners here, and their sons the sufferers [...] we cannot regard their diligent seeking of a successful competition before the Board of Examiners as anything but respectable [...].¹⁰⁶

The articles in *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine* and the *Cape Monthly Magazine* demonstrate a continuity of discussion between Edinburgh and the Cape. The periodical press had enabled a knitting together of a literary culture which was geographically dispersed, and as later sections will show, the South African Public Library is implicated in this trans-imperial conversation by keeping the copies of *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine* on the shelves. As the extracts above show, the *Cape Monthly Magazine* had a more liberal approach to the civil service examinations than *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine*. This was perhaps because the Cape Colony had a vested interest in encouraging more Englishmen to emigrate and further the anglicisation project which was underway at the time. This article also implies that boys who had passed the civil service entrance exam would make good colonists, because taking the exam displays their strong work ethic and desire for self-improvement.

¹⁰⁵ John William Kaye, 'The Indian Civil Service - Its Rise and Fall: Part 1', *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine*, January 1861, pp. 115 - 130; John William Kaye, 'The Indian Civil Service - Its Rise and Fall: Part 2', *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine*, March 1861, pp. 261 - 276.

¹⁰⁶ 'The Civil Service Examination Test', *Cape Monthly Magazine*, May 1861, pp. 295 - 305.

However Thornie was not destined to experience the colonies as a Civil Servant, as he failed his examinations in the summer of 1863, and refused to re-enrol in order to retake them (Ashton, *Lewes*, p.218). Instead, he wanted to enlist in a 'guerrilla band' to fight the Russians in the Polish uprising. Anxious that he would do so, Eliot and Lewes consulted their friends who had colonial or overseas connections for advice (*Eliot Letters*, IV, p.102). In September 1863, Lewes visited Edward Bulwer Lytton, the former Secretary of State for the Colonies, to discuss Thornie's options in British territories abroad (*Eliot Letters*, IV, p.106). Later that month, Eliot's friend Barbara Bodichon recommended that Thornie consider a career in South Africa, and wrote letters of recommendation on his behalf to her friends in Natal, the Buchanans (*Eliot Letters*, IV, p.107). On the 1st of October 1863, Lytton forwarded Lewes a letter of recommendation for Thornie to use in Natal, and on the 16th he boarded a ship bound for South Africa (*Eliot Letters*, VIII, p.313, and *Eliot Letters*, IV, p.109). He was kitted out with his letters of recommendation, along with a 'first rate rifle and revolver' – a phrase Eliot repeats in letters to two different correspondents, perhaps echoing Thornton's enthusiasm for his new weapons. In contrast to the extensive training he had undertaken for his prospective career in the Indian Civil Service, Eliot wryly observes that this time Thornie had just a 'smattering of Dutch and Zulu' that he had taught himself, and a 'very sanguine expectation of shooting lions' (*Eliot Letters*, IV, p.109 and p.117). At the same time that Thornie was shipped off to South Africa, Bertie was also sent away from the family home, to Scotland to learn agricultural skills (*Eliot Letters*, IV, p.111). Both Eliot and Lewes expressed their relief that they would 'at last' be able to resume their lives of 'quiet domesticity' following the boys' departure, as the younger Lewes boys were sent off into the world to make their own careers (*Eliot Letters*, IV, p.111 and p.116).

Thornton's experiences in South Africa have been extensively explored elsewhere (Bodenheimer, *Real Life*, pp.214 – 220 and pp.225 – 231, and Henry, *British Empire*, pp.64 – 76). Rosemarie Bodenheimer focuses on how Thornie revelled in his independence and freedom from his parent's influence, and notes that he was quickly drawn into 'the racist politics of Natal', referring to the local Xhosa people as 'Kafirs' and describing the rural Dutch Boers in derogatory terms (Bodenheimer, p.214 – 215). Nancy Henry also observes that Thornie relished his freedom in Natal, and argues that his letters home strongly resemble the adventure fiction that he read as a boy (Henry,

British Empire, p.64). She demonstrates the speed with which he appropriated South Africa's racist language and ideas, dehumanising Africans by calling them good 'game' for shooting and likening them to 'Chims or gorillas' (p.65). This must have been distressing for Lewes in particular, knowing his concern about the morally degenerative effects of travel to Africa, and his more nuanced opinion of African peoples' moral and intellectual abilities. Henry observes, revealingly, that Eliot removed the more objectionable sections of Thornie's letters when she excerpted them in her letters to Bodichon (p.65). Thus despite conforming to Eliot's requirements for travel and exploration literature – that it be informative as well as exciting – Thornie's letters reveal that his parents' concern about the negative effects of travel to the colonies were realised in their second son.

Thornie lived in South Africa for three years before he suggested that his brother Bertie should join him to start a farm in South Africa. During that time, he again fulfilled his parents' worries about him, this time by following his desire to engage in guerrilla military action by enlisting in a Boer commando to fight the Basutos on the frontier. Colonial warfare seems to have degenerated into vigilantism, as he and his Dutch colleagues took part in violent cattle raids against the local African villages, whilst ostensibly assisting the expansion of the white-controlled frontier in Natal (Bodenheimer, p.216 and Henry, pp.66 -67). However, Thornie seems to have believed Boer promises of grants of farmland to those who enlisted in the commando, and so in September 1866 Bertie followed his brother to Natal, at Thornie's request (*Eliot Letters*, IV, p.305). He travelled to South Africa on a mailsteamer, the same method of transport used to send his stepmother's books to the Cape Colony, and which formed part of a connective network that linked the Cape Colony to the metropole.¹⁰⁷ The first aspect of Eliot's vicarious colonisation of South Africa was complete, as her two stepsons began to participate in the physical conquest of Southern Africa.

The younger Lewes boys followed Eliot's book-children to South Africa because of a combination of factors. The 'younger son question', combined with the introduction of the competitive entry requirements for civil service roles made the domestic employment market unfriendly to Thornie and Bertie. This was exacerbated by their personal attributes, as Thornie's

¹⁰⁷ See chapter 2 for more analysis of the function of mailsteamers in the Cape Colony.

boisterous nature was unsuited to a desk-based job, whilst Bertie's educational difficulties meant that his parents felt that his best option was to train to be a farmer. However, as Henry points out, the colonial solution that the Leweses and Barbara Bodichon found for Thornie and Bertie in Natal 'required more intelligence, skill, and endurance than they would have needed at home' (Henry, *British Empire*, p.74). Instead of the training that he received in preparation for joining the Indian Civil Service, Thornie was equipped with weapons and a handful of words in Dutch and Zulu that he had taught himself. Bertie recognised that he had been ill-prepared for colonial life, writing home in 1871 that:

I often wish that I had learned some trade. A man in a colony ought to have some trade, if he has not got enough stock to live on a Farm with (*Eliot Letters*, IX, p.16).

In contrast to the thoughtfulness with which Eliot's cultural capital was marketed to colonial readers, her investment of human capital in the colony had received little preparation for the physical and psychological hurdles which would beset them.

The younger Lewes boys were sent to a colony that their parents had never visited, on the recommendation of a friend, ill-equipped for the challenges that they would face. Small wonder then, that their colonial careers ended abruptly with their deaths, Thornie's in England in 1869 and Bertie's in South Africa in 1875 (Bodenheimer, p.218 and 225). The poignancy of their unsuccessful colonial careers in South Africa echoes the ambivalence and instability of many failed colonial careers across the empire. Nicholas Thomas and Richard Eves chart the setbacks, unravellings, and insecurities of British settlers' experiences in their book, *Bad Colonists: The South Seas Letters of Vernon Lee Walker and Louis Becke*.¹⁰⁸ They stake a claim for the importance of studying how ordinary colonists encountered colonialism, in order to counteract the 'incomplete conception' of empire that had been created by travel and exploration books like those that Eliot and Lewes had reviewed (Thomas and Eves, p.16). Narratives like Anderson's, Livingstone's and Burton's 'epitomised the success of colonialism at its most confident moment' (Thomas and Eves, p.11). However, Thomas and Eves argue that focussing

¹⁰⁸ Nicholas Thomas and Richard Eves, *Bad Colonists: The South Seas Letters of Vernon Lee Walker and Louis Becke*, (Durham: Duke University Press, 1999). See also Nicholas Thomas, *Colonialism's Culture: Anthropology, Travel and Government*, (Oxford: Polity Press, 1994), pp. 158 - 169.

on individual accounts of colonial endeavour reveal the ‘incoherence [of] settler identity’ (Thomas and Eves, p.16). The physical and moral challenges that Thornie and Bertie faced in South Africa confirm Thomas and Eves’s argument. Whilst Thornie’s letters may have framed his and his brother’s experiences in the robust language of adventure stories, his letters also reveal the rapidity with which he assimilated to South Africa’s racist atmosphere and degenerated into a vigilante, killing indigenous Africans and stealing their livestock. In contrast to Thornie’s ‘bad’, debased colonialism, the educationally-backward Bertie may have had more success in South Africa if he had been properly trained in a profession. Unlike the impulsive Thornie, Bertie had married and started a family by 1871 (Bodenheimer, pp. 226 – 229). His references to the shipments of books that his father sent him, and requests for new books suggest that Bertie’s more thoughtful and introspective experience of colonialism was shaped by his parents’ cultural influence.¹⁰⁹ As the next section will demonstrate, both Eliot and the Cape colonists shared a belief in the civilising effects of literature – ‘bad’ colonists and degenerate travellers could perhaps be redeemed by exposure to morally-elevating literature.

The South African Public Library

This section argues that the committee of the South African Public Library was just as preoccupied with the moral repercussions of colonial life as Eliot and Lewes were. It explores how the committee of the South African Public Library positioned literature as a barrier against the contaminating effects of living so far away from England. I argue that the Library’s influence on the developing culture of the Cape Colony was twofold. Firstly it was part of a social network of influence, centrally situated, appealing to the English elite, and embodying an expression of the Cape’s increasing civic development. However, I also show that this seeming sense of English intellectual belonging was founded on exclusionary policies, as working class and non-white readers were not encouraged to use

¹⁰⁹ Bertie thanks Lewes for a ‘Box of Books’ in 1871, and requests copies of Eliot’s poetry in the next shipment (*Eliot Letters*, IX, p.16). Lewes and Eliot also sent Bertie a presentation copy of *Middlemarch* after it was printed later that year (*Eliot Letters*, V, p.217).

the Library facilities.¹¹⁰ The Library's ambiguous location in Capetonian society as a national library that excluded the larger population was exacerbated by a second type of influence – the regulation of reading material available in the Library for the colonists to access. By attempting to avoid stocking the types of literature that would appeal to the so-called 'general' reader, the Library's exclusionary policies became expressed in print too.¹¹¹ Whilst novels eventually made their way onto the Library's purchasing lists, novelists of a higher calibre such as Eliot were recommended to readers for their didactic properties. They were also used to prompt the Cape colonists to begin to develop their critical faculties and shape the development of a distinctly South African sense of national identity. Eliot's books thus did far more ideological work than Nancy Henry's conception of them as representing nostalgic visions of home for colonists allows for (Henry, *British Empire*, p.2).

The institution of moral civilisation

In March 1818 the Governor of the Cape Colony, Lord Charles Somerset, issued a proclamation introducing wine tax in order to support the establishment of a public library in the Colony. In the proclamation, he expressed his wish that such an institution would:

[...] lay the foundation of a System, which shall place the means of knowledge within the reach of the Youth of this remote corner of the globe, and bring within their reach what the most eloquent of ancient writers has considered to be one of the first blessings of life, 'Home Education'.¹¹²

The wording of this proclamation reveals Somerset's concern about the Cape Colony's physical and intellectual distance from the metropole, and positions the future library as a site of the development

¹¹⁰ The 'Regulations' printed in the South African Public Library's catalogue for 1862 show that it did not have an explicitly exclusionary race policy. However, I can find no documentary evidence of non-white nineteenth-century readers or subscribers at the Library. Presumably this was a result of a combination of factors – the Library's high subscription costs and other exclusionary policies that this chapter will elaborate on, as well as low levels of literacy amongst the non-white, working class population in the Cape at the time. (Frederick Maskew, *A General Catalogue of the Books in the South African Public Library, Cape Town, Cape of Good Hope, with a List of Donors, Office-Bearers, and the Regulations of the Institution*, (Cape Town: Saul Solomon and Co, 1862), pp. xvii - xxi.

¹¹¹ 'Report', in *Proceedings at the Fifth Anniversary Meeting of the Subscribers to the Public Library, Cape Town, Cape of Good Hope*, (Cape Town: George Grieg, 1834), pp. 1 - 18 (p. 7).

¹¹² 'Proclamation of the Governor, Lord Charles Somerset', 20 March 1818, quoted in A.M. Lewin Robinson, 'The History of the South African Library', in *The South African Library: Its History, Collections, and Librarians 1818-1968*, ed. by C. Pama, (Cape Town: A. A. Balkema, 1968), pp. 1-10 (p. 1).

of the Cape's educational and cultural knowledge-making structures. The important role that literature and the Library could play in bridging the Cape's isolation from England was repeated twenty years later in an address by the Attorney General, William Porter, at an annual meeting of the subscribers to the Public Library in Cape Town. In it, he stated that on entering the well-stocked Library:

I felt as if I stood within the precincts of a library collected in some great metropolis of Europe rather than one which had grown up in a few years in the little capital of a thinly populated Colony at the furthest part of Africa!¹¹³

Porter's layering of diminutive adjectives to describe the Cape emphasises its insularity and remoteness from metropolitan Europe. The importance that Porter and Somerset both place on the role of the Library in society reveals the Cape colonists' insecurities about their physical and intellectual position within the empire. Thus from its inception in 1818, through to its increasing maturity in the mid-nineteenth century, the South African Public Library was envisaged as a repository for the knowledge and information which would keep the isolated colonists up to date with, and connected to, their counterparts in Europe and specifically in England.

The Library's civilising role in the Cape Colony was frequently remarked upon in the meetings of the subscribers, and reprinted in the local press. In the same address by William Porter that I discuss above, he outlines the connection between the Library, education and morality. He argues that:

[...] it is by the printer, and not the prosecutor, it is by the schoolmaster, not the hangman, that a moral population must be made (Porter, 'Address', 1840, p.5).

Literature and education, and the Library as the site of intersection between the two, were therefore implicated in the creation of a population of good, or moral, colonists in South Africa. For Porter, books are 'the noblest monuments of noble minds' and without them and the Library, 'the public mind would stagnate [...] every elevating taste would be extinguished. We should become engrossed by sordid pursuits and vulgar tastes' (p.6). These sentiments were repeated by subsequent speakers at the subscribers' meetings, who shared similar watchwords when explaining the role that the Library

¹¹³ William Porter, 'Address', in *Proceedings at the Eleventh Anniversary Meeting of the Subscribers to the Public Library, Cape Town, Cape of Good Hope*, (Cape Town: Saul Solomon and Co, 1840), pp. 3 - 14 (p. 4).

played in the Cape Colony. The Library was 'designed to cultivate literary taste and mental adornment' and eliminate 'ignorance, indolence and vice'.¹¹⁴ It brought 'pleasure to all who sympathise with pure morals and improving intelligence' and helped the colonists to 'cultivate a taste for the beautiful and true'.¹¹⁵ The colonists positioned the South African Public Library as an institution of self-improvement, which gave them access to books and learning, and which would cultivate a refined and cultured colonial society.

The colonists' expectations of the role played by a public library within a community was typical of the period. Alistair Black has demonstrated that this philosophical model of the role of public libraries reflected 'Benthamite-inspired utilitarianism'. Taking John Stuart Mill as their inspiration, utilitarians emphasised the importance of what Black calls, 'good citizenship':

Good citizens recognised the utility of life's higher pleasures, which included the pursuit of useful knowledge and education ('base' pleasures brought only short-term happiness and often long-term misery). Good citizens were supporters of meritocracy (the cornerstone of which was education) and denounced the exclusivity of closed, corrupt societies. They also endorsed the doctrine of self-help.¹¹⁶

Public libraries had an important role to play in moulding good citizens, by providing an environment which promoted self-betterment through access to knowledge and learning (Black, p.30). Other British colonies displayed a similar attitude toward their libraries. For example, a catalogue of the Melbourne Public Library for 1861 explains that it had been founded by the Governor because he was:

[...] impressed with the importance of the influence likely to arise from voluntary adult mental improvement, as well as of the intellectual and moral elevation to be created by the cultivation of the works of standard authors [...].¹¹⁷

Libraries throughout the British Empire were therefore envisaged as environments of self-betterment and moral improvement, and as institutions which could create good colonial citizens.

¹¹⁴ William Abiah Newman, 'Address', in *Proceedings at the Twentieth Anniversary Meeting of the Subscribers to the Public Library, Cape Town, Cape of Good Hope*, (Cape Town: Saul Solomon and Co, 1849), pp. 3 - 25 (p. 21).

¹¹⁵ John Fairbairn, 'Address', in *Proceedings at the Thirty-third Anniversary Meeting of the Subscribers to the South African Public Library, Cape Town, Cape of Good Hope*, (Cape Town: Saul Solomon and Co, 1862), pp. 6 - 24 (p. 11); J.C. Brown, 'Address', in *Proceedings at the Thirty-fourth Anniversary Meeting of the Subscribers to the Public Library, Cape Town, Cape of Good Hope*, (Cape Town: Saul Solomon and Co, 1863), pp. 7 - 20 (p. 20).

¹¹⁶ Alistair Black, 'The People's University: Models of Public Library History', in *The Cambridge History of Libraries in Britain and Ireland. Volume 3: 1850-2000*, ed. by Alistair Black and Peter Hoare, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), pp. 24 - 39 (p. 29). See also Altick, *Common Reader*, pp.129 – 140.

¹¹⁷ 'Preface', *Catalogue of the Melbourne Public Library for 1861*, (Melbourne: Clarkson, Shallard and Co, 1861), p. v.

The Cape colonists' articulations of the South African Public Library's responsibility to 'cultivate' good settlers by exposing them to morally and intellectually improving literature makes a common nineteenth-century link between literature and culture. As the Introduction to this thesis discussed, Raymond Williams demonstrates that the word 'culture' has its origins in the Latin word 'cultura' which means to cultivate or tend (Williams, *Keywords*, p.87). In the eighteenth and nineteenth century, this meaning evolved and began to denote high levels of intellectual and artistic development (p.90). Culture's association with cultivation was retained, and the two words began to have class implications – the upper classes were well-educated and 'cultivated' (p.88). They were also civilised – refined, developed, well-ordered, and in possession of good manners and breeding (p.58). Civilisation and culture were also imagined in opposition to 'savagery or barbarism', which were the characteristics of 'primitive' nations and peoples (p.59).

Edward Said has made the linkage between culture and civilisation even more explicit, by investigating the role that culture plays in the imposition and maintenance of imperialism. He uses the cultural form of the novel to explore how literature was integral to the 'formation of imperial attitudes, references and experiences' (Said, *Culture and Imperialism*, p.xii). Like Williams, Said draws attention to the 'refining and elevating element' of culture, and he argues that it becomes associated with the nation state because it becomes a source of identity, which is imagined in opposition to other cultures and nations (pp.xiii – xiv). In the South African context, the English colonists in the Cape had to establish their own sense of culture and identity in a colony which already supported other, pre-existing cultures – those of the African people, the Dutch colonists and their imported Malay slaves. The colonists' ambition to make British culture preeminent in the Cape Colony can be seen in their approach to the Dutch cultural artefacts in the Library, which I explore later in this chapter, and also in their attitude toward African culture. John Fairbairn's address to the Library subscribers in 1862 demonstrates this. Fairbairn was a well-known literary figure in the Cape, as he had established the first independent English-language commercial newspaper in Cape Town in the 1820's. Fairbairn argued that the South African Public Library was a defence against superstition and ignorance. He used the example of the Xhosa people to illustrate his point:

In our neighbourhood, a few years ago, a whole people, believing that the present order of nature was about to terminate, slew their cattle, burnt their crops, and sat waiting till stones should be made

bread. Let us, then, cling to knowledge, to faith in the unchangeable, and, by enlarging and increasing the number of institutions like this, establish fortresses against superstition [...]
(Fairbairn, 'Address', 1862, p.22).

The Xhosa people had acted on a prophesy which claimed that if they destroyed their livestock and crops, the British would be driven out of their territory. Approximately 40,000 people died of starvation in the aftermath of their actions.¹¹⁸ Fairbairn attributed the Xhosa people's actions as an expression of their 'primitive' superstitions. According to him, the tragedy could have been avoided if they had had access to stable, rational European knowledge housed within institutions which, by being enlarged and increased, mirrored the expansion and consolidation of the British Empire. Fairbairn's language echoes the rhetoric which justified imperial expansion – the Xhosa people's savagery and lack of civilisation vindicated colonial control of their land and the imposition of British culture upon the people of all races of the Cape Colony.

The South African Public Library's mission to create good colonists was aided by its physical location in town. Throughout its history in the nineteenth century, the Library occupied a central position within Cape Town, and was networked with the Cape's other institutions of settlement through its proximity to them and through the social evenings that it hosted. Initially situated in a building adjacent to the government offices, the Library moved to a wing of the Commercial Exchange building on the Grand Parade in Cape Town in 1828. The building provided a venue for commercial, public and social activities within the colony, and the Library's annual meetings, begun here in 1830, brought these different groups of citizens together and helped to establish a coterie of like-minded English colonists (Robinson, 'Library', p.4). In the late 1850's the Library moved once again, this time to a purpose-built building at the lower end of the Botanical Gardens, which it shared with the South African Museum. It was inaugurated on 18 September 1860 by Prince Alfred, the Duke of Edinburgh, who was on a tour of South Africa at the time (Robinson, 'Library' p.4 and Dubow, *Commonwealth*, p.68).¹¹⁹ During the ceremony the Colonial Governor, Lord Grey, made a speech which demonstrated his ambitions for the cultural complex that he had created at the foot of

¹¹⁸ Timothy Joseph Stapleton, "'They No Longer Care for Their Chiefs': Another Look at the Xhosa Cattle-Killing of 1856-1857", *The International Journal of African Historical Studies*, 24. 2 (1991), pp. 383 - 392.

¹¹⁹ "The Visit of His Royal Highness, Prince Alfred", *Cape Monthly Magazine*, October 1860, pp. 193 - 197. "The Public Library", *Cape Monthly Magazine*, October 1860, p. 255.

the Botanical Gardens. He likened the South African Public Library to the ancient library of Alexandria and declared his hope that students using it would gain the education needed to aid ‘in the spread of civilisation, Christianity, and learning throughout the continent’ (‘Public Library’, 1861, p.99). Prince Alfred’s visit and his association with the new library building reinforced its status and further emphasised the Anglo-centric nature of the Cape’s cultural complex. Lord Grey’s speech again repeated the rhetoric of self-improvement, and invested the Library with a civilising role, imposing British cultural norms upon the colonial population, and fostering a sense of belonging in South Africa through its collection of books.

In addition to acting as a cultural conduit between Britain and the Cape, the South African Public Library was also a participant in a cultural network within the Cape Colony. The Library interacted with the other institutions in Cape Town’s cultural and civic hub by holding annual subscriber meetings which attracted individuals from different sectors of Cape Town’s society. The makeup of the Library committee demonstrates the interlinked relationship that the Library had with these other institutions. Although subject to minor changes over the years, the core committee members were primarily drawn from commercial, judicial, literary and educatory circles in the Cape.¹²⁰ This intermingling of the Cape’s elite English population was reinforced by the speakers that chaired the meetings. After William Porter’s address to the subscribers in 1840, it became customary for a high-ranking member of Cape Town’s society to present a lecture on a literary topic of their own choosing. Over the course of the next fifty years, the speakers would include Colonial Governors, Professors at the South African College, Attorney Generals of the Cape, and editors of local newspapers and periodicals.¹²¹ Their lectures were often reproduced in full in the *Cape Monthly*

¹²⁰ For example, the Committee in the 1860’s usually included William Porter (Attorney General at the Cape), E. M. Watermeyer (Member of the Cape’s Parliament and a judge), Professor Cameron (Professor at the South African College), William Hiddingh (a judge), Roderick Noble (Professor at the South African College and editor of the *Cape Monthly Magazine*), Major Longmore (a magistrate and contributor to the *Cape Monthly Magazine*), and Langham Dale (Professor at the South African College and Superintendent-General of Education for the Cape).

¹²¹ The Colonial Governors were George Grey (1855), Henry Barkly (1871) and Henry Bartle Frere (1877). The Professors at the South African College were James Cameron (1870) and Langham Dale (1874); the Attorney Generals of the Cape were William Porter (1840, 1847, 1851) and William Downes Griffith (1869); the editor of the *Cape Argus* newspaper was Thomas Ekins Fuller (1865 and 1878); and the editors of the *Cape Monthly Magazine* were Alfred Cole (1866) and Roderick Noble (1868).

Magazine, and the literary review articles therein contained commentary on the content of the lecture.¹²² For example, the 'Literary Review' of June 1857 reported the following:

The Annual Meeting of the Public Library was held on the 9th of last month. These annual gatherings in that hall are now regularly looked upon as furnishing the best and richest literary treat with which the Cape colonists are blessed. Since 1839, the chair has been taken in succession by men of greatest eloquence, ability and learning [...].¹²³

The status associated with hosting the Cape's brightest thinkers, orators and social figures made the Library the locus of the Cape's intellectual and cultural activities.

The elitism of the Library's meetings was remarked upon by a contributor to the *Cape Monthly Magazine* in the 1870's.¹²⁴ Written by an anonymous 'Lady' who described her career in the Cape retrospectively in epistolary form, the letter in question describes her attendance at the Library meeting of 1862. She takes a slightly more caustic view of the proceedings, writing that every year 'all the blue stockings muster in great force to hear themselves well praised, and to take their share in the proceedings of a mutual admiration society' (p.338). The insularity and exclusivity that this description suggests is borne out in the Library's subscriber figures. In 1848, a third class subscription rate had to be introduced because there were only 207 subscribers to the Library, out of a population of approximately 22,500 people in Cape Town.¹²⁵ Richard Altick reports similar trends amongst metropolitan libraries in England, noting the 'popular apathy' amongst readers in Manchester and Liverpool once the initial excitement about the establishment of new libraries there wore off.¹²⁶ Nevertheless, the South African Public Library's low membership levels were remarked upon by Anthony Trollope when he visited the Library thirty years after the third class rate had been introduced:

¹²² For example, Thomas Fuller's lecture was reprinted in the *Cape Monthly Magazine* in July 1878. (Thomas Ekins Fuller, 'Influence of Modern Life on Literature', *Cape Monthly Magazine*, July 1878, pp. 17 - 30.)

¹²³ Roderick Noble, 'Literary Review', *Cape Monthly Magazine*, June 1857, pp. 375 - 383 (p. 381).

¹²⁴ 'Life at the Cape: By a Lady', *Cape Monthly Magazine*, June 1871, pp. 330 - 339. This letter forms part of a series that I discuss in more details Chapter 2 of this thesis.

¹²⁵ 'Report', in *Proceedings at the Nineteenth Anniversary Meeting of the Subscribers to the Public Library, Cape Town, Cape of Good Hope*, (Cape Town: Saul Solomon and Co, 1848), pp. 1 - 6 (p. 10).

¹²⁶ Richard Daniel Altick, *The English Common Reader: A Social History of the Mass Reading Public, 1800-1900*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1963), p. 227.

I was told that the readers in Capetown [sic] are not very numerous. When I visited the place there were but two or three.¹²⁷

The lack of regular subscribers reveals that the South African Public Library was more of a contested space than the committee acknowledged in their annual reports – it was too elite and had pitched itself too high for its reading population. While the Library's committee viewed the institution as a manifestation of the Cape's increasing development, and represented it as a great social and intellectual hub, the Library was not accessible to all members of society, and those who did have access to it did not seem to make the most use out of it.

William Porter's address to the subscribers of the South African Public Library in 1840 claimed that the institution was a site of instruction for the people of the colony, 'of every age, and sex, and class, and colour', and that it belonged to 'every man in the community' of Cape Town (Porter, 'Address', 1840, p.5 and 6). Yet he contradicted himself by acknowledging that the Library was 'not, directly, concerned with the instruction of the lower orders'. Rather, he felt that education and learning would filter down 'naturally' from the upper classes to the lower classes through social contact (p.6). Lewis Roberts has explored the class-conscious nature of metropolitan Victorian public libraries, and argues that public libraries were viewed as institutions which could 'purify, elevate and disinfect working-class reading' by providing appropriate reading matter to their readers and controlling their access to them.¹²⁸ Roberts argues that public libraries attempted to regulate and normalise the behaviour of working class users, a contention which an analysis of the South African Public Library's approach to working class readers supports (Roberts, p.120).

To protect the prestige and exclusivity of the South African Public Library, working class readers were encouraged to use the Popular Library, which had been established in 1835 and was also situated in the Commercial Exchange building (Dick, *Hidden History*, pp. 43 – 46). Its remit was to make literature more available to the lower classes of Cape Town's society by making access to its

¹²⁷ Anthony Trollope, *South Africa*, ed. by James H. Davidson, (Cape Town: A. Balkema, 1973), p. 81. I have chosen to use this edition of *South Africa* because of Davidson's useful and informative Introduction and annotations.

¹²⁸ Lewis C. Roberts, 'Disciplining and Disinfecting Working-Class Readers in the Victorian Public Library', *Victorian Literature and Culture*, 26. 1 (1998), pp. 105 - 132.

reading materials 'cheap'.¹²⁹ The first meeting of the Friends of the Popular Library was well-attended:

The body of the Hall was nearly filled, and the gallery was crowded by some hundreds of young people, juvenile emigrants, apprentices and others, who listened with apparently intense interest to the proceedings (*Popular Library Report*, 1835, p.3).

Sir John Herschel, the eminent British mathematician and astronomer, chaired the meeting and repeated the now-familiar rhetoric of culture and civilisation. He championed access to literature throughout all levels of Capetonian society, from the 'cream' to the 'subordinate mass' because that 'noble invention' was all that separated the colonists from 'barbarism' (*Popular Library Report*, 1835, pp.3 – 4).¹³⁰ Sir John Wylde then read the Popular Library committee's report, in which he explained the rationale behind the selection of books on the shelves:

[...] no class [of literature] is excluded. The strictest regard is had to their moral tendency. Nothing profane, impure, or calculated in any degree to vitiate the taste or pervert the imagination, – nothing that a loyal subject, a good man, and a good Christian would refuse to admit into his own Library, or to place in the hands of his own children, is permitted to occupy a place on our shelves (*Popular Library Report*, 1835, p.9 – 10).

The committee positions the working classes, with their underdeveloped powers of literary discrimination, as childlike, needing the moral guidance of the upper classes on the committee to ensure that only appropriate reading matter is held in stock.¹³¹

The Popular Library's lifespan as an institution of good colonialism was short-lived, as it declined in popularity after an initial flurry of excitement, and eventually closed in 1867.¹³² In contrast to the South African Public Library, little documentary evidence of the Popular Library survives, suggesting that its aims were pursued with less bureaucratic zeal than the colony's national library. Rene Immelman speculates that the Popular Library suffered from a lack of funds, an affliction that also beset the South African Public Library. As a result of this financial pressure, and perhaps because

¹²⁹ *Report of the First Anniversary Meeting of the Friends of the Popular Library, Cape Town, Cape of Good Hope*, (Cape Town: G. J. Pike, 1835), p. 8.

¹³⁰ Michael J. Crowe, 'Herschel, Sir John Frederick William, First Baronet (1792–1871)', in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004) Online edition. <<http://0-www.oxforddnb.com.catalogue.ulrls.lon.ac.uk/view/article/13101>> [accessed 14 October 2015].

¹³¹ For more about British metropolitan concerns about lower class reading, see Altick, *The English Common Reader*, referenced above.

¹³² Rene Ferdinand Malan Immelman, 'Book Provision in the Cape Colony, 1800 - 1860', *The Journal of Library History*, 5. 1 (1970), pp. 35 - 46.

of the Popular Library's lack of success, the South African Public Library decreased its subscription fee in 1848 to try to attract 'the younger and less opulent class of the community'.¹³³ However, the new subscribers to the Library were accused of returning books after their due dates, and damaging them by smoking over them, writing on them and folding down the corners of pages. Subscribers were reminded that the books they borrowed 'may shortly pass into other hands, and that the fumes of tobacco are not the most agreeable of odours in a lady's drawing room'.¹³⁴ The Library's mission to civilise the Cape colonists thus encompassed supervising their intellectual development, as well as regulating their behaviour.

In addition to regulating what the colonists read and how they behaved, the South African Public Library's class-based exclusiveness was also apparent in its operational functions. In the mid-nineteenth century, the committee was urged to extend the Library's opening hours to enable working colonists to use the facilities in the evening.¹³⁵ However lack of funds, combined with the limited numbers of colonists who made use of the evening openings (an average number of fourteen subscribers used the Library per night) resulted in constant to-ing and fro-ing amongst the committee as to whether they should make evening openings a permanent feature.¹³⁶ In 1865 the subject was tackled by the committee again, after the local Mechanics' Institute approached them to consider extended opening hours for their members.¹³⁷ However the committee reported that due to the costs associated with evening openings, they could not comply with the request. They did, however, offer a reduced subscription rate to the members of the Mechanics' Institute, provided that at least twenty men took up the offer. The Mechanics Institute had to decline this suggestion, due to insufficient

¹³³ 'Report', in *Proceedings at the Twentieth Anniversary Meeting of the Subscribers to the Public Library, Cape Town, Cape of Good Hope*, (Cape Town: Saul Solomon and Co, 1849), pp. 1 - 3 (p. 2).

¹³⁴ 'Report', in *Proceedings at the Twenty-first Anniversary Meeting of the Subscribers to the Public Library, Cape Town, Cape of Good Hope*, (Cape Town: Saul Solomon and Co, 1850), pp. 3 - 6 (p. 4).

¹³⁵ In 1853 the speaker at the annual meeting, Lieutenant-Governor Charles Darling, suggested that the Library ought to open in the evenings to allow working men to access it. Later opening hours were only implemented in 1855, following donations from private individuals to pay for the Librarian's extra hours (Charles Darling, 'Address', in *Proceedings at the Twenty-fourth Anniversary Meeting of the Subscribers to the Public Library, Cape Town, Cape of Good Hope*, (Cape Town: Saul Solomon and Co, 1853), pp. 5 - 31 (p. 25). 'Report', in *Proceedings at the Twenty-seventh Anniversary Meeting of the Subscribers to the Public Library, Cape Town, Cape of Good Hope*, (Cape Town: Saul Solomon and Co, 1856), pp. 1 - 3 (p. 1).).

¹³⁶ The 'Report' of 1856 notes that on average, only 14 readers used the library per evening ('Report', 1856, p.1)

¹³⁷ 'Report', in *Proceedings at the Thirty-sixth Anniversary Meeting of the Subscribers to the Public Library, Cape Town, Cape of Good Hope*, (Cape Town: Saul Solomon and Co, 1865), pp. 3 - 6 (p. 3).

members ('Report', 1865, p.4). The Cape Colony's institutions for self-improvement seem to have had limited uptake amongst the population. Dubow speculates that this was because, unlike those of Australia, Canada and New Zealand, the Mechanics Institution in South Africa did not 'adapt' itself to the Cape Colony's population. This inflexibility was partly to do with the fact that many of the men founding these institutions were from the middle-to-upper classes, and unable to empathise with the working classes. The white working class population of the Cape Colony was also too small to support this kind of self-help institution, as the labour force in colonial South Africa was primarily made up of ex-slaves and African people (Dubow, *Commonwealth*, p.49 – 50). The Cape Colony's institutions which were meant to assist in the production of 'good' citizens and colonists therefore did little to help the South African Public Library to produce ideal colonists.

The Library's nineteenth-century history is thus a history of ambiguity and unsettled self-confidence, as it struggled to negotiate its role within the Cape Colony. The colonists viewed the Library as an expression of their capital's increasing civic and intellectual maturity, and this was a source of pride amongst them. The importance that the Cape colonists invested in the civilising effect of books and the learning that they contained can be seen in the Library's central position within the town throughout its history. Its social position was reinforced by the annual subscriber meetings, which brought upper class white English society together in a self-congratulatory setting. It was indeed a 'bastion of Anglophone cultural and intellectual influence' (Dubow, *Commonwealth*, p.47). However, as an English-language stronghold it was primarily influential in the elite circles of educated middle and upper class English colonists. Access to the Library by working-class users became problematic, as the committee were reluctant to alter the operational functions of the Library to accommodate them. White belonging, which at first sight appeared to have been expressed through the founding of the South African Public Library, was therefore more unsettled than first appearances suggest.

The dangers of indiscriminate reading

The South African Public Library's self-appointed duty was to participate in the production of 'good' colonists and citizens by giving them access to elevating reading materials. The act of reading had a dual significance – reading itself was seen as an improving activity, which was magnified by the improving content of the literature that reading gave the colonists access to. This section explores the types of books that were available in the Library, and how the Library attempted to mould the literary tastes of the colonists. I argue that the books in the South African Public Library were many-layered signifiers. While they reminded the English colonists of home, the books were also a status symbol and a source of pride amongst them. The selection of books held on the shelves also displays the Library's anglophilic propensities, as Dutch acquisitions took second place to those in English. Lastly, by looking at the works of George Eliot in the Library, I argue that novels had the power to shape the development of the Cape's national culture, literature and identity by prompting the colonists to discuss the interplay between literature, 'good' colonialism and colonial nationalism.

The South African Public Library's expansive and rare collection had a dual colonial provenance. In 1761 a Dutch East India Company official, Joachim Nicholas von Dessin, had bequeathed his scholarly library of approximately 4000 volumes to the Dutch Reformed Church in anticipation of the opening of a public library.¹³⁸ One hundred years later, the Library received its second significant donation – Sir George Grey's personal library. Grey was the Governor of the Cape from 1854 to 1861, and his collection included a great many rare and valuable books including medieval manuscripts, Shakespeare's First and Second Folios, and first editions of *Faerie Queen*, *Paradise Lost*, and Sir Isaac Newton's *Principia Mathematica*.¹³⁹ The Library's stock was also augmented by smaller donations, and the purchases made by its literary agent in London, Smith, Elder and Co. The firm had been chosen as suppliers to the South African Public Library in 1850 because of their existing arrangements with colonial libraries in India, and their knowledge of shipping timetables to

¹³⁸ Theodorus Friis, *The Public Library in South Africa: An Evaluative Study*, (Cape Town: Afrikaanse Pers-Boekhandel, 1962), p. 69.

¹³⁹ *Guide to the National Library of South Africa*, (Pretoria: National Library of South Africa, 2010), pp. 17 - 19.

the East ('Report', 1850, p.5).¹⁴⁰ Thus despite its desire to emulate the operational and pedagogical functions of metropolitan libraries of London, the South African Public Library's collection was deeply influenced by its colonial heritage and links to other colonial territories.

However, while the Library's original collection was Dutch, in the nineteenth century it developed into an Anglo-centric institution. In an article published about the Library in the *Cape Monthly Magazine* in 1861, the Dessinian collection is described as being placed on the shelves '[...] amongst a goodly collection of others far exceeding them in number and probably in immediate interest [...]' to the *Magazine's* predominantly English readers ('Public Library', 1861, p.93). Dutch books were infrequently purchased by the committee. In 1877 the Colonial Governor, Sir Henry Bartle Frere, remarked on this in his address to the Library's annual meeting, noting:

Then there is another part of the library which is, I believe, also unique and it is the Dutch library upstairs, which was left to the country so long ago by patriotic Dutchmen and especially by its founder Dessin. That part of the library, is I believe, in particular branches, quite unique, but again it is not complete. You will search in vain for a proper representation of modern Dutch literature [...] I think that this defect of modern Dutch Literature ought to be looked to immediately by all who consider themselves as representing our great predecessors on this continent.¹⁴¹

Even those who sought to point out the deficiencies of the Dutch collection situated the responsibility for remedying the problem with the Dutch population, instead of the custodians of the Library. Rather than representing the joint interests of the two groups of white colonists in South Africa, the Library actively participated in the cultural anglicisation of the Cape in the nineteenth century through its predominantly English collection and purchasing strategies. As an institution of British cultural settlement, the South African Public Library prioritised the education and moral advancement of British settlers over the other inhabitants of the town.

The South African Public Library's purchasing strategies were also influenced by the so-called 'Great Fiction Question' which was debated in libraries across Britain, the United States and

¹⁴⁰ For more information on Smith, Elder and Co.'s business in India, see Leonard Huxley, *The House of Smith Elder*, (London: William Clowes and Sons, 1923), pp. 9 - 10. See also Bill Bell, 'Smith, George Murray (1824–1901)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004, <<http://0-www.oxforddnb.com.catalogue.ulrls.lon.ac.uk/view/article/36138>> [accessed 16 December 2015]. Unfortunately neither of these references discusses the firm's business with the Cape Colony.

¹⁴¹ Henry Bartle Frere, 'Address', in *Proceedings at the Forty-eighth Anniversary Meeting of the Subscribers to the Public Library, Cape Town, Cape of Good Hope*, (Cape Town: Saul Solomon and Co, 1877), pp. 13 - 41 (p. 32).

Europe.¹⁴² The utilitarian ethic of self-improvement through access to ‘useful’ literature could not be reconciled to stocking imaginative literature in libraries, and the question of whether to provide popular fiction, and if so, which type, revealed an underlying concern as to whether public libraries were places of education or leisure (Snape, p.4; Black, p.35). In the South African Public Library this debate played out throughout the nineteenth century, starting from one of the first annual meetings of the subscribers in 1834, during which conflict arose as to whether the Library ought to become a reference library and suspend its lending arm. Opposition to this position came from the more practically-minded members of the committee, who sought to improve the Library’s finances by expanding its circulating function. They argued that stocking ‘light fiction’ would attract a more ‘general’ class of reader and improve the poor subscriber figures (‘Report’, 1834, 7). The South African Public Library, despite being in a small colony at the southern-most reaches of the British Empire, was thus participating in a global discussion about access to literature and libraries’ roles in guiding readers toward appropriate reading matter.

In 1848 the Cape’s Governor, Sir Harry Smith, again raised the topic of ‘lighter literature’ at the annual subscribers’ meeting.¹⁴³ He suggested that fiction could be used as a lure to draw more readers to the Library, and thereby expose them to the more serious and improving works of science and learning (p.7). However, Smith’s position was heavily criticised by the speaker at the annual meeting in 1857, Canon Henry M. White. White complained fiercely about the wide circulation of imaginative works amongst subscribers to the South African Public Library, because he believed that by reading novels ‘undisciplined minds are tempted to take in more bad principle, grossness, vice, immorality, than they would endure in any other shape’.¹⁴⁴ He claimed that imaginative fiction was so perniciously influential that Dickens’s evocation of London’s criminal underworld in *Oliver Twist* had prompted a crime wave in the Cape Colony, as readers mimicked the misdeeds represented in the

¹⁴² Robert Snape, *Leisure and the Rise of the Public Library*, (London: Library Association, 1995). Robert Darnton, *The Kiss of Lamourette: Reflections in Cultural History* (London: Faber, 1990), p. 161. Martyn Lyons, ‘New Readers in the Nineteenth Century: Women, Children and Workers’, in *A History of Reading in the West*, ed. by Roger Chartier and Guglielmo Cavallo, (Oxford: Polity, 1999), pp. 313 - 344.

¹⁴³ Harry Smith, ‘Address’, in *Proceedings at the Nineteenth Anniversary Meeting of the Subscribers to the Public Library, Cape Town, Cape of Good Hope*, (Cape Town: Saul Solomon and Co, 1848), pp. 6 - 18 (p. 7).

¹⁴⁴ Henry M. White, ‘Address’, in *Proceedings at the Twenty-seventh Anniversary Meeting of the Subscribers to the Public Library, Cape Town, Cape of Good Hope*, (Cape Town: Saul Solomon and Co, 1857), pp. 6 - 38 (p. 12).

book (p.17). White was embedding his censure of *Oliver Twist* within the critical reception of the so-called 'Newgate School' of fiction in England.¹⁴⁵ Thackeray had criticised Dickens's portrayal of criminality in *Fraser's Magazine* in 1839, arguing that:

Gentlemen and men of genius may amuse themselves with such rascals, but not live with them together. The public taste, to be sure, lies that way; but these men should teach the public.¹⁴⁶

White reinforces the authority of his position by aligning his criticisms of *Oliver Twist* with metropolitan commentators, albeit eighteen years after the original debate. While he acknowledges that reading for amusement is 'legitimate', White strenuously urges the Library to avoid stocking 'immoral' books which may have an adverse influence upon the colony's less educated and discerning readers (p.12).

The debate about fiction spread from the South African Public Library to the local press. In a 'Literary Review' article published in the June 1857 issue of the *Cape Monthly Magazine*, the reviewer, Roderick Noble, defended *Oliver Twist* against White's attack. He claimed that the novel aimed at 'great social reforms' and instead of glorifying crime, represented it as 'intensely odious'. Noble distinguished between lower novels which glorify horror and criminal activity, and higher forms of literature, which despite their elevated status still provide entertainment ('Literary Review', June 1857, pp.381 – 383). The wholesome entertainment provided by popular fiction could therefore offset the potential harmful effects of novel-reading, provided readers selected their books with care.

The novel's harmful potential to influence its readers had been of concern since prose fiction rose to prominence as a 'new' form of literature from the beginning of the eighteenth century. Increasing levels of literacy, coupled with progressively cheaper book production and the proliferation of novels meant that fiction posed a growing threat to society – '[...] the spectre of distracted or deluded masses of readers' raised fears of 'mass literacy producing the opposite of enlightenment'.¹⁴⁷ Commentators like Clara Reeve warned against the evils of indiscriminate novel

¹⁴⁵ For more metropolitan criticism of *Oliver Twist*, see *Dickens: The Critical Heritage*, ed. by Philip Collins, (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1971), pp. 8 and 45 - 46.

¹⁴⁶ William Makepeace Thackeray, 'Horae Catnachianae', *Fraser's Magazine for Town and Country*, April 1839, pp. 407 - 424 (p. 424).

¹⁴⁷ Patrick Brantlinger, *The Reading Lesson: The Threat of Mass Literacy in Nineteenth Century British Fiction*, (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1998), pp. 2-3.

reading amongst women in 1785. She recommended the careful selection of appropriate reading matter, in order to avoid the malign influence of 'bad books'.¹⁴⁸ The drive to distinguish between 'higher' and 'lower' literature, or 'good' and 'bad' books continued throughout the nineteenth century. George Eliot, whose novels would have a strong influence on the South African Public Library's positioning of itself as a moral guide, also expressed ambivalence about poor quality literature and her own cultural status. She wrote a number of articles for the *Westminster Review* in which she criticised bad writing and set out her realist aesthetic. In July 1856, in an article titled 'The Natural History of German Life', Eliot argues that '[...] our social novels profess to represent the people as they are, and the unreality of their representations is a grave evil' (Eliot, 'German Life', p.54). She had earlier defined realism as 'the doctrine that all truth and beauty are to be attained by a humble and faithful study of nature [...]'.¹⁴⁹ In 'German Life', Eliot argues that realism is important because:

Art is the nearest thing to life; it is a mode of amplifying experience and extending our contact with our fellow men beyond the bounds of our personal lot. All the more sacred is the task of the artist when he undertakes to paint the life of the People (p.54).

For Eliot, good literature represents people faithfully, which in turn encourages the development of 'moral sentiment' and social cohesion between individuals. In contrast, bad literature, like the novels written by 'silly lady novelists', does little work in terms of moral instruction or the expansion of its readers' sympathies.¹⁵⁰ In her criticism of 'trashy' novels, Eliot argues that feminine literature which is the product of the author's vanity and lack of verisimilitude, is lacking the 'moral qualities that contribute to literary excellence – patient diligence, a sense of responsibility involved in publication, and an appreciation of the sacredness of the writer's art' ('Silly Novels', p.461 and p.460). Good or serious imaginative literature could therefore be just as morally-elevating and instructive as non-fiction books, provided it was based on thoughtful observations of real life, and that it aimed to encourage sympathy amongst its readers.

¹⁴⁸ Clara Reeve, *The Progress of Romance, through Times, Countries and Manners; [...] in a Course of Evening Conversations. By C. R. Author of the English Baron, The Two Mentors, &c. In Two Volumes*, ([Colchester]: W. Keymer, 1785), p. 120.

<<http://find.galegroup.com/ecco/infomark.do?&source=gale&docLevel=FASCIMILE&prodId=ECCO&useGroupNames=kings&tabID=T001&docId=CW3313748746&type=multipage&contentSet=ECCOArticles&version=1.0>> [accessed 25/05/2013].

¹⁴⁹ George Eliot, 'Art and Belles Lettres', *Westminster Review*, April 1856, pp. 625 - 650 (p. 626).

¹⁵⁰ George Eliot, 'Silly Novels by Lady Novelists', *Westminster Review*, October 1856, pp. 442 - 461.

The Cape colonists also participated in the debate regarding the value of novels and imaginative fiction. Prior to Canon White's denouncement of 'immoral' books, other commentators had recommended reading fiction. At the first meeting of the Friends of the Popular Library, for example, Sir John Herschel had defended the novel's popularity because the ability to feel amused was a God-given faculty, and novels created a 'delight in reading for the sake of pleasure' *Popular Library Report*, 1835, p.5).¹⁵¹ He claimed that novels also had the potential to be educational, since historical works like Walter Scott's could familiarise readers with the past (p.5). Other Cape commentators emphasised the moral aspects of reading fiction. After Harry Smith's address to the South African Public Library in 1848, recommending the purchase of more novels, a letter was published in the *Cape Town Mirror* supporting his position. The writer of the letter emphasised the potential that novels had to encourage social unity, since they created 'sympathies and mutual kindness' between the classes in Cape Town.¹⁵² By stocking high-quality fiction, the South African Public Library's mission to create ideal colonists could be furthered, by exposing them to entertaining but nevertheless morally improving literature.

The decision to stock imaginative literature created a predicament. While more subscribers may have been attracted to the Library, they resisted the lure of 'serious' forms of literature in favour of novels. For example, the year of Canon White's address, 55% of the books which had been borrowed from the Library had been novels (White, 'Address', pp.11 – 12). Libraries in Europe were reporting similar trends. For example, the public library in Sheffield reported that between 1856 and 1867 almost half of the books that were borrowed or consulted in the reading room were fiction, while in Liverpool, novels made up 34% of the library's borrowing activity between 1867 and 1868 (Altick, *Common Reader*, p.231). This trend would become more pronounced as the century progressed, as a library in Warrington reported that novels accounted for 83.6% of their borrowing

¹⁵¹ Herschel is repeating sentiments that he expressed in an address to the subscribers to the Windsor and Eton Public Library in 1833. In his speech he argued that the working classes should be given access to literature as a form of amusement, to stimulate their imaginations and spread a love of literature amongst them. (John Herschel, 'Address to the Subscribers to the Windsor and Eton Public Library and Reading Room', in *Essays from the Edinburgh and Quarterly Reviews*, (London: Longman, Brown, Green, Longmans, and Roberts, 1857 [1833]), pp. 1 - 20.

¹⁵² 'Popular Literature', *Cape Town Mirror*, 1.1, (September 1848), p. 3. In David Johnson, 'Starting Positions: The Social Function of Literature in the Cape', *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 19. 4 (1993), pp. 615-633 (p. 627).

activity in 1876, whilst Parisian municipal libraries reported that 55% of their borrowings in 1882 were novels (Snape, p.73 and Lyons, p.335). Other colonial libraries show similar statistics – the Bagbazar Reading Library in Calcutta reported that 75% of their loans in 1902 were works of fiction.¹⁵³ This report is dated fifty years after Canon White's complaints, and reveals that librarians there had come to terms with the popularity of imaginative literature:

The enormous preponderance of fiction and the comparatively small attention paid to more serious literature are no doubt to be regretted, but they indicate the tendency for the age [...] (in Joshi, p.60).

By the end of the nineteenth century novels were still not thought of as 'serious literature', despite (or perhaps because of) their obvious popularity with the reading public. The members of the committee of the South African Public Library were therefore battling to control a global trend toward increasing consumption of fiction and light literature.

In an effort to preserve the studious atmosphere at the South African Public Library, and to protect its valuable collection, the committee reduced the number of novels that were purchased. Between 1860 and 1880, the reports for the annual general meetings show that on average approximately 23% of the newly acquired volumes in the library were works of fiction and amusement.¹⁵⁴ Nevertheless, some still called for the Library to suspend its circulating arm entirely, to make it a reference library for research and higher learning.¹⁵⁵ Others argued that the Library should keep its circulating function, but that it should be renamed to 'issuing branch' or 'lending department' to avoid the associated 'visions of Lydia Languish, in her curl papers, receiving a lot of trashy romances from her waiting-woman'.¹⁵⁶ This statement was made by the Colonial Governor, Henry Barkly, and his reference to the romance-addled Miss Languish from Richard Sheridan's play *The Rivals* (1775) once again demonstrates the intellectual time lag between the Cape and the metropole.

¹⁵³ Priya Joshi, *In Another Country: Colonialism, Culture, and the English Novel in India*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002), p. 61.

¹⁵⁴ This figure was calculated by averaging the number of works of 'light amusement' reportedly purchased by the South African Public Library between 1860 and 1880. (Reports of the Annual Subscriber Meetings, 1860 – 1880).

¹⁵⁵ James Cameron, 'Address', in *Proceedings at the Forty-first Anniversary Meeting of the Subscribers to the Public Library, Cape Town, Cape of Good Hope*, (Cape Town: Saul Solomon and Co, 1870), pp. 7 - 29 (p. 8).

¹⁵⁶ Henry Barkly, 'Address', in *Proceedings at the Forty-second Anniversary Meeting of the Subscribers to the Public Library, Cape Town, Cape of Good Hope*, (Cape Town: Saul Solomon and Co, 1871), pp. 9 - 24 (p. 24).

It also makes his argument a particularly gendered statement, as novel-reading is represented in the play as a specifically feminine occupation. Sir Anthony Absolute characterises reading as a 'black art' which imparts 'diabolical knowledge' to disobedient and wayward daughters.¹⁵⁷ This figuring of women as more vulnerable than men to the effects of bad literature was a common image in the nineteenth century, and we have already seen how it had its roots in even earlier discussions about the regulation of impressionable girls' reading.¹⁵⁸ Governor Barkly has transported this conceptualisation of women as stereotypically vapid consumers of low quality literature to the South African context. The South African Public Library, in addition to excluding working class readers, also appears to have been reluctant to appeal to the Cape's novel-reading female population.

The fear that the South African Public Library's readers were voracious consumers of light fiction and novels was in some way realised. A literary review article published in the *Cape Monthly Magazine* of November 1857 complained about the tattered state of the Library's copies of books by popular authors such as Charles Dickens, William Makepeace Thackeray, Charlotte Brontë and Edward Bulwer-Lytton.¹⁵⁹ The Library's catalogue for 1862 also shows that some of its readers' tastes ran to the gothic and sensational. Ann Radcliffe's gothic novel, *Gaston de Blondville* (1826), as well as Wilkie Collins's *The Dead Secret* (1856) were held in stock, along with the suggestively titled *The Abduction: or Marvels of Mesmerism* (1850) by Leopoldine Henrika Procházka. However the most popular novelists, based on the number of titles held in stock in the Library, appear to be those who wrote historical fiction, set their narratives overseas, or penned novels of manners. Seventeen of Frances Trollope's books were held in stock, along with thirteen titles by the American author, James Fenimore Cooper and ten by Catherine Gore.¹⁶⁰ These novels outnumber the few copies of Collins's and Radcliffe's books, which suggests that while thrilling novels may have been popular, the readers in the Cape Colony preferred, or were guided toward, books with a trans-imperial interest, such as Cooper's historical romances of American frontier life, or Gore's silver fork novels about genteel

¹⁵⁷ Richard Brinsley Sheridan, *The Rivals*, (London: William Heinemann, 1905), Act I, Scene II, p.15. <<http://ia700202.us.archive.org/11/items/therivals00sheriala/therivals00sheriala.pdf>> [accessed 27 March 2012].

¹⁵⁸ Kate Flint, *The Woman Reader, 1837-1914*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993).

¹⁵⁹ Roderick Noble, 'Literary Review', *Cape Monthly Magazine*, November 1857, pp. 337 - 342 (p. 341).

¹⁶⁰ Data extrapolated from Maskew, *General Catalogue*, 1862, pp.235 – 248.

living. 'Light' literature appears to have been very popular at the South African Public Library, and risked derailing the institution's self-appointed duty to civilise the Cape colonists.

These 'light' novels shared the Library's shelf space with George Eliot, an author who would come to be regarded as a sage, and an author of 'serious' literature later in the nineteenth century. We know from Bertie Lewes's visit to the Library that he saw Eliot's books and George Henry Lewes's *Fortnightly Review* on the shelves in 1866 (Henry, *British Empire*, p.2). Records from the South African Public Library support Bertie's observation. The 1862 catalogue shows that the Library held copies of *Adam Bede* (1859) and *The Mill on the Floss* (1860) (*Catalogue*, 1862, p.235 and p.242). By 1881, a year after George Eliot's death, the Library's stock had increased to include the novels *Felix Holt* (1866), *Middlemarch* (1871 – 1872), and *Daniel Deronda* (1876), as well as her poetry, *The Spanish Gypsy* (1864 – 1868) and *The Legend of Jubal* (1874). Some of Lewes's non-fiction works, such as *Problems of Life and Mind* (1875) had also been added to the Library's collection.¹⁶¹

While Eliot and the South African Public Library may have shared a concern about the proliferation of 'trashy' novels in the 1850's, Eliot's own cultural status at this stage in her career was in a state of flux. Eliot's popularity, as evidenced by tremendous sales figures for *Adam Bede* and *The Mill on the Floss*, and their presence on the shelves of a colonial library, made her anxious not to appear that she was merely writing for pecuniary reward and popular success.¹⁶² In addition to being concerned about her position as a popular author, Diane Elam argues that Eliot's scandalous behaviour, living as the 'wife' of an already-married man, meant that she had to protect the moral standard of her art, and that 'Eliot's integrity could only be guaranteed by taking her own novels very seriously indeed [...]'.¹⁶³ Rosemary Bodenheimer also notes Eliot's anxiety about her cultural status, but she attributes her ambivalence to her conflict over ambition:

¹⁶¹ Frederick Maskew, *A Catalogue of Books in the South African Public Library, Cape Town, Cape of Good Hope, with a List of Donors, Office Bearers, and the Regulations of the Institution*, (London: Henry S. King and Co., 1881), pp. 490, p.495, p.585 and p.586.

¹⁶² Gordon S. Haight, *George Eliot: A Biography*, (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1985), pp. 279, p.307 and p.327.

¹⁶³ Diane Elam, *Romancing the Postmodern*, (London: Routledge, 1992), p. 125.

Because she had achieved financial success, she now had also to defend herself against the idea that she wrote only for fame and fortune: increasingly she found rhetorical ways to disengage herself from the literary marketplace she had conquered (Bodenheimer, *Real Life*, p.174).¹⁶⁴

Eliot's equivocal attitude toward her cultural position meant that she consciously fashioned herself as a modern 'sage' and a serious writer, just as the Cape colonists who used the South African Public Library projected themselves as an elite group of colonial intellectuals (Bodenheimer, p.232).

The South African Public Library's circulation records no longer survive, so empirical evidence of Eliot's popularity is non-existent. However, the Cape colonists' interest in her fiction can be inferred from various sources of anecdotal evidence. Chapter 2 of this thesis will analyse a number of literary reviews of Eliot's work that were published in the *Cape Monthly Magazine*. In addition to these reviews, there are also references to Eliot's works in the proceedings of the meetings of the South African Public Library. The Reverend Thomas Ekins Fuller (who hosted Trollope during part of his tour of South Africa) appears to have been a fan of George Eliot's literature, as he refers to her novels in both of his addresses to the subscribers.¹⁶⁵ Fuller was the editor of the *Cape Argus* newspaper between 1864 and 1873 and later became the general manager of the Union Steamship Company in Cape Town. He was also a politician, and was a member of the Cape's legislative assembly from 1879 – 1900.¹⁶⁶ Fuller's first address to the subscribers took place in 1865, and he chose to discuss contemporary art and literature. No doubt influenced by the fiction debate playing out at the Library at the time, Fuller emphasised the 'spiritual' nature of George Eliot and Charlotte Brontë's works, and he recommended them to his listeners because of their ability to 'paint the deeper aspects of human life'.

They are more *en rapport* with the poetic spirit we have endeavoured to describe. They everywhere recognise the higher relationships of life, and regard all its details in their light. Though they have some of the highest qualifications of fiction writers, in their brilliant powers of description and their

¹⁶⁴ See also Sarah's Wah's article, in which she suggests that Eliot consciously occupied a peripheral position in celebrity culture in order to distinguish the intellectual rigour of her works against the more popular authors who were her peers (Wah, 'Churlish Celebrities').

¹⁶⁵ Footnote to p.747 of Anthony Trollope, *The Letters of Anthony Trollope*, ed. by N. John Hall and Nina Burgis, 2 vols (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1983), II.

¹⁶⁶ Christopher Saunders, 'Fuller, Sir Thomas Ekins (1831–1910)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004, <<http://0-www.oxforddnb.com.catalogue.ulrls.lon.ac.uk/view/article/33292>> [accessed 9 June 2015]. F. R. Metrowich, 'Fuller, Sir Thomas Ekins', in *Dictionary of South African Biography*, ed. by W.J. de Kock, 5 vols (Cape Town: Published for the National Council for Social Research by Nasionale Boekhandel, 1968) I, pp. 304 - 305.

subtle entrance into phases of human sin and sorrow, they have plainly chosen a narrative style as a means of conveying higher teaching. [...] For the first time, we have writings of great artistic power, realising the divine needs of human nature, and scouting a manhood which does not realise its higher destiny.¹⁶⁷

For Fuller, the appeal of Eliot and Brontë's fiction is that it encourages a spiritual and empathetic resonance within the reader, which enhances its didactic function. Rather than merely providing amusement, good quality fiction is elevated to the same artistic level as poetry. George Eliot's novels thus become a tool in Fuller's hands, with which he defends his position in the Cape Colony's debate about the status of fiction. By giving Eliot and Brontë's works as exemplars of good, serious and didactic fiction, Fuller attempts to elevate the status of imaginative literature and thus influence the direction of the South African Public Library's development.

The second instance in which Fuller refers to Eliot's works in a speech to the Library subscribers took place in May 1878, when he presented a lecture on 'Influence of Modern Life on Literature'.¹⁶⁸ In it, he argues that a reciprocal relationship exists between art and what he calls 'national life' (Fuller, 'Modern Life', p.17). Just as books, newspapers and periodical literature shape 'the conversation and life of every day [...] and the thoughts and purposes of a people', people influence how literature is published through commerce, interest in new fields of research, and in new ways of thinking and of appreciating beauty (p.17-28). Fuller uses a quote from *The Mill on the Floss*'s Philip Wakem to illustrate his argument that commercial activity in the literary market can have an adverse effect on readers when they are presented with an overwhelming choice of reading matter:

'I think of too many things – sow all sorts of seeds, and get no great harvest from any one of them. I'm cursed with susceptibility in every direction, and effective faculty in none... I flutter all ways, and fly in none' (Fuller, 'Modern Life', p.23).¹⁶⁹

Fuller suggests that modern readers have substituted careful and critical reading habits for skimming in an attempt to become well-read. His solution to the influence of trade on literature is to redeploy

¹⁶⁷ Thomas Ekins Fuller, 'Address', in *Proceedings at the Thirty-sixth Anniversary Meeting of the Subscribers to the Public Library, Cape Town, Cape of Good Hope*, (Cape Town: Saul Solomon and Co, 1865), pp. 7 - 33 (p. 23).

¹⁶⁸ Thomas Ekins Fuller, 'Address', in *Proceedings at the Forty-ninth Anniversary Meeting of the Subscribers to the South African Public Library, Cape Town, Cape of Good Hope*, (Cape Town: Saul Solomon and Co, 1878), pp. 14 - 28. Fuller's address was reprinted in the *Cape Monthly Magazine* in July of that year. See footnote 122 for this reference. All further references to Fuller's address in the text will be from the *Cape Monthly Magazine* edition of the lecture.

¹⁶⁹ Taken from George Eliot, *The Mill on the Floss*, 3 vols (Edinburgh and London: Blackwood and Sons, 1860), II, p. 255.

commerce as a method to improve book circulation, increase the accessibility of books through cheap editions, and continue to disseminate useful knowledge (Fuller, 'Modern Life', p.19-20). Fuller also instructs his readers to use their critical faculties to strengthen the Cape's national culture, through and thereby influence the output of the local literary market. The relationship between literature and national consciousness was a recurring theme amongst the Cape's literary elite, as similar language was used when local newspapers and literary periodicals were founded. (See Chapter 3 of this thesis.) Thus, rather than simply functioning as a vehicle for transporting nostalgic images of England to the colonies, Eliot's novels were being used to fashion and mould the ever-evolving sense of South African national consciousness and literary identity.

The Mill on the Floss (1860): reading and the formation of moral character

This chapter has demonstrated that Eliot, Lewes and the Cape colonists shared a concern that the colonies were a potential site of moral and spiritual degradation, where individual character was in a state of flux. The colonists had to negotiate what it meant to be European in Africa, especially as the African colonies elicited extreme behaviour from visitors and settlers. They either degenerated into 'savage' behaviour, as exemplified by Roualeyn Gordon-Cumming and Thornie Lewes, or they used the opportunity presented by the move to the colonies to reinvent themselves and develop their careers.¹⁷⁰ This chapter's focus on the formation of moral character, and how literature can mould readers in the colonies into 'good' colonists, invites an analysis of Eliot's fiction. One of the fundamental features of the novel as a literary form is that it traces the development of character. As a result, despite the fact that none of Eliot's novels were set in the colonies, her preoccupation with her characters' moral development enables us to reflect upon colonial life through them. This section

¹⁷⁰ See, for example, Kirsten McKenzie, *Scandal in the Colonies* (2004), in which she argues that European settlers in the colonies used the moment of emigration to reinvent themselves, even, at times, inventing new identities. Similarly Mary Shannon also demonstrates how R.H. Horne's move to Australia enabled him to achieve the sort of literary fame and notoriety that he had longed for in London (Mary L. Shannon, *Dickens, Reynolds, and Mayhew on Wellington Street: The Print Culture of a Victorian Street*, (Farnham: Ashgate Publishing Company, 2015), p. 177.)

will investigate how Eliot represented the relationship between reading and Maggie's intellectual and ethical maturity in *The Mill on the Floss* (1860). This novel has been chosen because it was clearly popular amongst the colonists, as it is referred to twice in addresses to the subscribers to the South African Public Library. I will use this section to suggest that *The Mill on the Floss* may have resonated with the colonists because it is a novel that is about the mutability of character and its relationship to culture, especially through the agency of reading books. If reading is linked to civilisation and high levels of culture, then why are Maggie's reading habits so unruly? The link between reading and self-improvement speaks to the self-proclaimed mission of the South African Public Library to be a resource for 'Home Education' (Somerset, Proclamation', 1818, p.1). This section therefore charts the parallels between the didactic nature of Eliot's book and the pedagogic power that the Cape colonists invested in it, and asks how *The Mill on the Floss* spoke to a non-domiciled English population.

Literary critics view *The Mill on the Floss* as Eliot's most autobiographical novel. They interpret Maggie Tulliver's tempestuous interactions with her brother Tom as a reworking of Eliot's relationship with her brother Isaac (Bodenheimer, *Real Life*, p.192 – 193).¹⁷¹ Rohan Maitzen also suggests that Maggie's 'painful maturation in a provincial milieu hostile to her passionate, imaginative nature reflects Eliot's own struggles growing up as an intellectually ambitious girl with little encouragement and scant educational opportunities'.¹⁷² The novel dramatizes Maggie's straining against the limitations imposed upon her by her provincial setting and her family's gendered expectations of her. While "slowish" Tom is sent to a "[...] downright good school [...]" in the hopes that he will become an engineer or surveyor, Maggie causes her parents concern because she is "[...] over-'cute'", and, according to Mr Tulliver, women have "[...] no business wi' being so clever [...]".¹⁷³ Instead she is sent with her cousin Lucy to Miss Furniss's boarding school, about which

¹⁷¹ Carolyn Burdett, 'Sexual Selection, Automata and Ethics in George Eliot's *The Mill on the Floss* and Olive Schreiner's *Undine and from Man to Man*', *Journal of Victorian Culture*, 14. 1 (2009), pp. 26 - 52 (p. 30).

¹⁷² Rohan Maitzen, 'The Mill on the Floss: Education, Literature, and the Bildungsroman', *Discovering Literature: Romantics and Victorians* (The British Library), 2014, <<http://www.bl.uk/romantics-and-victorians/articles/the-mill-on-the-floss-as-bildungsroman>> [accessed 21 October 2015].

¹⁷³ George Eliot, *The Mill on the Floss*, 3 vols (Edinburgh and London: Blackwood and Sons, 1860), III, pp. 6, 12, 13, 21 and 22.

Eliot says little except that Maggie began to learn to behave with decorum as a ‘young lady’ (*Mill*, I, p.350). Good sons, like good colonists, are the result of a ‘downright good’ education and self-betterment.

Maggie makes up for the deficits in her education by becoming an avid reader. Her father observes that at the age of nine, her literacy levels are on a par with the local vicar, and that she reads aloud with fluency and ease (*Mill*, I, p.14 and p.22). However, her unguided forays into her father’s library produce some alarming results. In one of the first scenes in which we encounter Maggie reading, her father’s friend Mr Riley asks her to explain the illustrations in the book she is looking at, evidently assuming she is occupied with a picture book. Instead, Maggie is reading Daniel Defoe’s *The History of the Devil*, which contains “dreadful” pictures:

‘That old woman in the water’s a witch — they’ve put her in to find out whether she’s a witch or no, and if she swims she’s a witch, and if she’s drowned — and killed, you know — she’s innocent, and not a witch, but only a poor silly old woman. But what good would it do her then, you know, when she was drowned? Only, I suppose, she’d go to heaven, and God would make it up to her. And this dreadful blacksmith with his arms akimbo, laughing — oh, isn’t he ugly? — I’ll tell you what he is. He’s the devil [...]’ (p.23).

The image of the drowning witch prefigures Maggie’s own death in the flood at the end of the book, and it also suggests societal judgement of unconventional women.¹⁷⁴ Maggie’s precocious descriptions of the two pictures shock her father and Mr Riley into attitudes of ‘petrified wonder’, and Mr Riley asks Maggie whether she has any “prettier” books, more suitable for a girl. Once again she astonishes her male audience by bringing them her copy of John Bunyan’s *The Pilgrim’s Progress*, but subverting the morally uplifting content of the book by showing them how she and Tom have coloured the pictures of the devil: “[...] the body all black, you know, and the eyes red, like fire, because he’s all fire inside, and it shines out his eyes” (p.25). Maggie’s childish imagination has been captured by the images of witches and the devil in her books, and she embodies the fears held by the committees of the South African Public Library and the Popular Library about unguided and indiscriminate reading. Minds unaccustomed to reading fiction may not draw the appropriate morally-

¹⁷⁴ Nancy L. Paxton, *George Eliot and Herbert Spencer: Feminism, Evolutionism, and the Reconstruction of Gender*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991), p. 77.

elevating and civilising influence from novels if they are left to read in an unstructured and haphazard manner.

However, the varied nature of Maggie's reading material makes up for her occasional ventures into books that are unsuitable for a girl of her age. Maggie tells Mr Riley that she has a copy of Aesop's Fables, and a "book about Kangaroos and things" (*Mill*, I, p.25). She recommends *Pug's Tour of Europe* to Luke, the head miller at her father's mill, because it contains information about the wider world, and the people in it – "[...] they're our fellow-creatures Luke, – we ought to know about our fellow-creatures" (p.47). Luke's lack of interest in foreign people prompts Maggie to then suggest that he read *Animated Nature* for its descriptions of exotic animals like elephants and civet cats (pp.47 – 48). Maggie's engagement with these books expands her frame of reference from parochial St Oggs to an awareness of the wider world. They allow her to have vicarious experiences of far-off lands, foreign people and exotic animals, just as the *Arabian Nights* had done for Eliot as a child. In this instance, Maggie's reading matter contributes to her moral and intellectual development, as she becomes aware of the existence of foreign people and forms an empathetic connection with her 'fellow' men.

Maggie's sympathy with foreign people also originates in her own feelings of difference from her family. She and her brother have 'inverted' the gendered lines of their parental inheritance – Tom is like his mother, while Maggie takes after her father.¹⁷⁵ While Maggie's mother and brother share the Dodson genealogy and are blond and fair-skinned, Maggie is dark-skinned. This causes Mrs Tulliver to liken her daughter to a "mulatter", and her Aunt Pullet to compare her to a gypsy (*Mill*, I, p.14 and 122). In the nineteenth century, the gypsies were figures of wildness, and their refusal to give up their itinerant lifestyle was interpreted as 'willfully [sic] deviant'.¹⁷⁶ Deborah Nord argues that gypsies' racial differences were used as a contrast to the characteristically English values of decorum and

¹⁷⁵ Jules David Law, *The Social Life of Fluids: Blood, Milk, and Water in the Victorian Novel*, (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2010), p. 77. This section of his book largely reproduces material from Jules David Law, 'Water Rights and the "Crossin O Breeds": Chiastic Exchange in *The Mill on the Floss*', in *Rewriting the Victorians: Theory, History, and the Politics of Gender*, ed. by Linda M. Shires, (New York: Routledge, 1992), pp. 52 - 69.

¹⁷⁶ Katie Trumpener, 'The Time of the Gypsies: A "People without History" in the Narratives of the West', *Critical Inquiry*, 18. 4 (1992), pp. 843 - 884 (p. 864).

reserve, to 'inject impetuosity, brooding and passion' into novels.¹⁷⁷ Furthermore, Nord suggests that gypsy figures in women's literature of the mid-nineteenth century not only register cultural difference, but also 'a deep sense of unconventional, indeed aberrant, femininity' (Nord, p.190). This can certainly be seen in Maggie's atypical (for her family) interest in books and reading, and in her passionate and confrontational exchanges with her mother early in the book. She refuses to do patchwork "like a little lady", because she thinks it is pointless to rip up fabric only to sew it back together again, and cuts her hair because she is tired of being teased about how dark and uncontrollable it is (*Mill*, I, p.15 and p.113). Maggie's racial otherness signifies her difference from her family, and her non-conformity with their gendered expectations of her.

Maggie's dissimilarity from her family introduces race into the questions that the *Mill on the Floss* poses about reading and civilisation. Could Maggie's racial otherness be the reason behind her inappropriate and idiosyncratic reading habits? Her encounter with actual gypsies suggests that this is not the case (*Mill*, I, pp.189 – 214). After pushing her 'pink and white' cousin Lucy into a patch of cow-churned mud, Maggie resolves to seek refuge with some nearby gypsies, to escape being told off and to find a sense of kinship with them (p.189 and p.193). Maggie naively imagines that the gypsies will be happy to see her, and that she will be able to educate them, teach them proper hygiene habits, and become their queen – she wishes to rule over them and civilise them (p.193, 201, 204). Maggie is reassured that her impetuous decision was the right thing to do when she gets to the camp, and recognises her own physiognomy in the face of a female gypsy who approaches her (p.199 – 200). However, she is also alarmed by the poverty and strangeness of the temporary settlement, and despite initially thinking that her stories were helping her to gain 'great influence' over the gypsies, she becomes increasingly frightened by their foreign language, unexpected behaviour and slight hostility toward her (p.203). Maggie takes refuge in her partially remembered books, offering to teach the gypsies about Columbus and geography (p.202). However, their overwhelming strangeness makes Maggie finally aware that she will never be able to civilise the gypsies by imparting her 'amusing and

¹⁷⁷ Deborah Epstein Nord, "'Marks of Race': Gypsy Figures and Eccentric Femininity in Nineteenth-Century Women's Writing", *Victorian Studies*, 41. 2 (1998), pp. 189 - 210 (p. 190).

useful knowledge' to them (p.206). Maggie is neither a Dodson nor a gypsy, and her 'superior knowledge' does little to impresses either group (p.193). Maggie's otherness from both groups is less related to her colouring and racial characteristics, and more to do with her unrestrained and disorderly intellectual activities. Her reading, which has given her access to a wide yet haphazard knowledge base, has not civilised her because it has been pursued in such an undisciplined manner.

Eliot's commentary about the effects of undisciplined reading once again speaks to the South African Public Library's anxiety that uneducated colonists could be led astray by exposure to inappropriate reading material. Alan Rauch, in his survey of the nineteenth-century proliferation of what he calls 'knowledge texts', namely 'encyclopaedias, instruction manuals, and didactic works for children', demonstrates that this was a common anxiety.¹⁷⁸ These texts allowed readers access to information and learning in their own homes, but that meant that readers at home could 'interpret, infer and combine facts and details with impunity' (Rauch, p.24). This is certainly the case with Maggie. She has access to a dictionary, but she reads it inappropriately, finding words like 'polygamy' in it (*Mill*, I, p.208). She treats religious tracts as colouring in books, and is more interested in the illustrative examples than the rules of syntax in her brother Tom's Latin textbook (*Mill*, I, p.275). Maggie's eccentric responses as a reader reflect the commonly held worry that the risks of home education outweighed the benefits. This concern was magnified in a colonial context because of South Africa's distance from the knowledge-producing centres of England, and because of the time lag that affected the delivery of new books and information to the Cape. Colonists were at a double risk, not only of misreading texts, but also of misreading obsolete or out of date books. The need to regulate and discipline readers at the South African Public Library and at the Popular Library became more pressing when fictional characters like Maggie demonstrated the effects of indiscriminate reading.

In contrast to Maggie's haphazard self-education, Tom gains a formal education under a schoolmaster called Mr Stelling, in the hopes that he will become an engineer (*Mill*, I, p.7). Mr Stelling

¹⁷⁸ Alan Rauch, *Useful Knowledge: The Victorians, Morality, and the March of Intellect*, (Durham: Duke University Press, 2001), p. 2.

was educated at Oxford, but his unimaginative and ‘uniform’ methods of teaching by rote, without explaining or simplifying his lessons, do not suit Tom Tulliver’s slow intellect (*Mill*, I, p.256 and p.262). Tom is aware that Mr Stelling becomes impatient with him, and, as Jules Law observes, his education becomes a process of ‘emasculat[ion]’, because he is mystified and confused by Mr Stelling’s teaching methods. This makes him feel vulnerable and tearful, like a ‘girl’ (Law, *Social Life*, p.82, *Mill*, I, p.262). Feminising Tom is not Mr Stelling’s intention, however, as he also refuses to admit Maggie into his classroom in a formal manner, claiming that girls can “[...] pick up a little of everything, I daresay [...] They’ve a great deal of superficial cleverness; but they couldn’t go far into anything. They’re quick and shallow” (*Mill*, I, p.281). In contrast to Maggie’s ‘shallow quickness’, Tom’s aptitudes are far more practical:

Tom had never found any difficulty in discerning a pointer from a setter, when once he had been told the distinction, and his perceptive powers were not at all deficient. I fancy they were quite as strong as those of the Rev. Mr Stelling; for Tom could predict with accuracy what number of horses were cantering behind him, he could throw a stone right into the centre of a given ripple, he could guess to a fraction how many lengths of his stick it would take to reach across the playground, and could draw almost perfect squares on his slate without any measurement (*Mill*, I, p.281 and p.258).

Mr Stelling’s institution is inappropriate for a practical boy like Tom, whose natural abilities and talents seem more suited to an outdoor, colonial kind of lifestyle than a schoolroom or office. Eliot wrote about Tom’s school experiences at roughly the same time that Thornie and Bertie Lewes were at Hofwyl, and it seems reasonable to assume that some of Thornie’s ‘active adventurous temperament’, passion for ‘roving about in search of “specimens”’, and ill-suitedness to sitting at a desk all day has been reworked in Tom (*Eliot Letters*, III, p.449). Eliot appears to be suggesting that education and reading should be flexible enough to impart learning, whilst being responsive to the abilities and aptitudes of the child in question.¹⁷⁹ Reading and education can only mould socially responsible and morally developed individuals if they encourage empathy rather than indifference, and self-discipline instead of wilful impetuosity.

Neither Tom nor Maggie’s educations prepare them for life as adults. Tom discovers that his Latin, algebra and geometry are inappropriate for a young man of his social standing, and in a

¹⁷⁹ For more on how Eliot explores the topic of education in *The Mill on the Floss*, see Paxton, *Eliot and Spencer*, p.71 – 79.

meeting with his Uncle Deane, learns that he needs to be familiar with accounts and book-keeping if he wants to become involved in 'manly business' (*Mill*, II, p.67 – 69). Mr Deane gets Tom a job in one of his warehouses and Tom has supplementary accounting lessons in the evenings after work, which he pursues with determination (*Mill*, II, p.100). His 'steady self-government and energetic work' eventually result in him being able to regain Dorlcote Mill, however his feelings toward Maggie harden in their severity because he does not have a wide enough 'vision' to be able to accept her impulsive behaviour (*Mill*, III, p.235 and p.269). Maggie's 'trivial' and insubstantial education, both at home and at Miss Furniss's school, also limits her perceptions and makes her susceptible to Stephen Guest's charms (*Mill*, III, p.110). However, as Carolyn Burdett demonstrates, the negotiations between Maggie and Stephen after their night together in Mudport demonstrate Maggie's innate sense of human responsibility toward her friends and family (Burdett, p.33). Countering Stephen's argument that the "natural law" of their attraction means that they should be together, Maggie states:

'We can't choose happiness either for ourselves or for another: we can't tell where that will lie. We can only choose whether we will indulge ourselves in the present moment, or whether we will renounce that, for the sake of obeying the divine voice within us — for the sake of being true to all the motives that sanctify our lives' (*Mill*, III, p.221 and p.226).

Burdett convincingly argues that this scene between Maggie and Stephen demonstrates Eliot's belief that '[...] authentic moral life is not a matter of abstract ethical notions. Instead, it is an ongoing process of intense, embodied and enworlded negotiation [...]' (Burdett, p.34). The Tulliver children's partial and incomplete educations limit their abilities to clearly perceive and negotiate the world around them, and detrimentally exaggerate their personality traits – Tom's self-discipline becomes rigidly unforgiving and Maggie's empathy for others and longing for affection leads her to behave thoughtlessly. Their poor educations limit their abilities to mature into civil, balanced individuals.

The scenes of reading and education from the *Mill on the Floss* discussed above would have had significance to Eliot's colonial readers in South Africa on many levels. Maggie's dark-skinned foreignness and her ambiguous position in society as neither a gypsy nor a Dodson reveals Eliot's

preoccupation with 'English cultural identity'.¹⁸⁰ This anxiety about the ambivalence of cultural heritage was shared by the Cape colonists – they had to negotiate their contrasting ambitions to strengthen their cultural affiliations with England and develop their own literary and cultural heritage. They also had to adapt their identity as English people domiciled abroad, in a colony which had a pre-existing Dutch heritage. As we have seen, the colonists attempted to create a sense of coherent English identity through the literary institution of the South African Public Library, which became an expression of their cultural settlement, and simultaneous sense of ambivalent belonging in the colony. Eliot's writing would also influence one of South Africa's best-known nineteenth-century authors, Olive Schreiner. Carolyn Burdett and Patricia O'Neill both note that Schreiner reread *The Mill on the Floss* before she wrote *The Story of an African Farm* (1883), and both draw parallels between the challenges that Maggie and Lyndall face to find love and intellectual fulfilment (Burdett, p.36).¹⁸¹ However, whilst Schreiner disliked the emphasis that Eliot placed on duty in *The Mill on the Floss*, she nevertheless felt that 'Maggie is the finest portrait of a woman's soul that ever was painted' (Burdett, p.36, O'Neill, p.13).¹⁸² In another letter she calls *The Mill on the Floss* one of her favourite books because it was no 'ordinary novel', but more like 'science or poetry'.¹⁸³ Schreiner recognises Eliot's aim to elevate the novel form, from a vehicle for badly-written romance, to a philosophical, educational and spiritual medium.

The scenes of reading in *The Mill on the Floss* contain a commentary about the role that literature and education play in the formation of moral character, and this resonated with the Cape colonists. Maggie's enthusiastic yet unruly reading habits suggest that reading is, in itself, not sufficient to mould a person of good moral character – education and guidance is needed to be able

¹⁸⁰ Alicia Carroll, 'Race', in *George Eliot in Context*, ed. by Margaret Harris, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), pp. 230 - 237 (p. 230).

¹⁸¹ Patricia O'Neill, 'Introduction', in *The Story of an African Farm*, ed. by Patricia O'Neill, (Peterborough: Broadview, 2003), pp. 9 - 30 (p. 13).

¹⁸² Olive Schreiner to Philip Kent, 12 May 1883, Harry Ransom Research Center, University of Texas at Austin, Olive Schreiner Letters Project transcription', lines 11 – 18, <<https://www.oliveschreiner.org/vre?view=collections&colid=27&letterid=6>> [accessed 3/11/2015]. Please note that this reference is formatted as per the requirements of the Olive Schreiner Letters Project.

¹⁸³ Olive Schreiner to John X. Merriman, 29 June 1896, NLSA Cape Town, Special Collections, Olive Schreiner Letters Project transcription', Lines 80 – 87 <<https://www.oliveschreiner.org/vre?view=collections&colid=51&letterid=3>> [accessed 3/11/2015]. Please note that this reference is formatted as per the requirements of the Olive Schreiner Letters Project.

to assimilate, understand and use the knowledge that books contain. This anxiety about the effects of undirected reading was common at the time – commentators in Britain and in South Africa warned about the pernicious influence that inappropriate reading habits could have upon the individual. In the colonial setting this anxiety was heightened by the sense of intellectual distance from metropolitan knowledge-producing structures, and fears about the degrading effects of life in Africa. Reading, knowledge and intellectual institutions can only effectively civilise a population if they are deployed with care, and geared appropriately for the individuals which make up the society.

Conclusion

Thinking about George Eliot and the South African Public Library in relation to each other has facilitated a recontextualisation of Eliot's works and allowed this chapter to mark out an alignment between novelistic explorations of moral character, conceptualisations of 'good' colonialism, and the role that literature can play in the 'civilisation' of a colonial population. By considering Eliot's works in a colonial context, this chapter has explored how they were complicit in the cultural colonisation and anglicisation of the Cape Colony. This cultural colonisation was facilitated by the South African Public Library, an elite, Anglophone institution, geared toward developing the Cape's nascent intelligentsia. The Cape colonists were self-conscious about their distance from metropolitan England, and the intellectual isolation that resulted from their distance in miles, and in transportation time, from London. The Library was intended to bridge this gap, by allowing the colonists access to up-to-date reading matter. However, as I have demonstrated, the Library's self-proclaimed aim to give its users the resources needed to educate themselves and to maintain metropolitan standards of education and self-improvement were hampered by the difficulty that the institution experienced in negotiating its role in the colony. In both its material arrangements and in the books that it chose to stock, the Library regulated and controlled its readers' responses to texts, in an attempt to emulate the English metropolitan libraries that it took as its exemplar.

Nancy Henry argues that 'Eliot's novels preserved a distinctive Englishness and provided a touchstone of national identity for colonial emigrants and readers throughout Great Britain' (Henry,

British Empire, p.6). Whilst this may be true in the context of the Cape Colony, this chapter has demonstrated that in addition to representing English culture abroad, Eliot's novels were also used as tools to manipulate and shape the running of my first institution of literary colonialism, the South African Public Library. The committee of the Library reacted to the donation of Lord Grey's books in much the same way that Dorothea reacted to seeing her mother's emeralds at the beginning of *Middlemarch* – with acquisitive relish and an urge to keep them to themselves.¹⁸⁴ However, Eliot's books were used to encourage the Library's committee to expand their collection, and allow 'light' English literature and novels to be admitted into the hallowed shelves of the Library. Thus, rather than simply preserving English national identity abroad, Eliot's books were used by the Cape's colonists to begin to develop their own imaginative and critical facilities. Doing so, it was hoped, would influence the development of South Africa's fledgling sense of nationhood – a more disruptive function than Henry's conceptualisation allows for.

In the context of the Cape Colony and the South African Public Library, Elizabeth Helsinger's description of Eliot's work is highly relevant.¹⁸⁵ Talking about *Daniel Deronda*, she writes:

Eliot's novels also contradict their own project of creating a cohesive national identity because they register painful memories of exclusion, and still more dangerously of excluding others, at the centre of images meant to bridge difference and construct new national communities (p.236).

This representation of Eliot's novels can also be taken as a metaphor for the South African Public Library. Whilst it was supposedly a national Library, expressive of the Cape's maturity and host to the colony's developing intelligentsia, it was also a site of exclusion. Working class users were unable to make full use of its facilities, and those that did were criticised for using them inappropriately, whilst women readers were stereotyped and ridiculed for being overly fond of trashy novels. The institution which was meant to bridge the emotional and intellectual gap between Cape Town and metropolitan England instead assisted in widening the gap, as users who were not white, English and educated were unable to access the books which formed the central cable of the Library's connective network

¹⁸⁴ George Eliot, *Middlemarch: A Study of Provincial Life*, 3 vols (Edinburgh: William Blackwood and Sons, 1871), I, p. 6.

¹⁸⁵ Elizabeth K. Helsinger, *Rural Scenes and National Representations: Britain 1815 – 1850*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997).

with England. White belonging, as expressed through the foundation and expansion of the South African Public Library was thus founded on an ambiguous space of conflict, contradiction and unsettlement.

Eliot's and Lewes's journalistic writings of the 1850's demonstrate their anxiety that South Africa was a site of potential moral degradation. The Leweses' decision to send their sons there in the 1860's was therefore also founded on feelings of ambivalence and anxiety. South Africa was a last resort for Thornie and Bertie, due to the limited employment prospects in England, combined with the boys' temperaments and educational attributes. As we have seen, the frontier in Natal was not an appropriate setting for Thornie to attain a gentleman's position or income. Rather, it provided the opportunity for him to engage in the type of violent guerrilla warfare that his parents had tried to avoid, and these activities morally compromised the impressionable young Thornie. Although he did not smear himself in the blood of his victims like Roualeyn Gordon Cummings, Thornie certainly exhibited a similar type of exaggerated bravado as he became embroiled in the racial warfare of the frontier. South Africa was not the type of romantic setting that Barbara Bodichon found in Algiers, nor the site of the type of adventuresome activities that Eliot and Lewes encountered in the books that they read and reviewed in the 1850's. Rather it was a combination of smaller colonies which were in varying degrees of development, attempting to establish themselves in an alien landscape. Expectations of Africa and the reality of frontier living made for disjointed bedfellows, as the Lewes boys were unprepared for colonial life.

The disjunction between the Lewes boys' failed colonial careers and the success of Eliot's investment of cultural capital in South Africa raises questions about the significance of her legacy in a colonial context. As this chapter has demonstrated, Eliot's novels were recruited by those who wished to encourage the colonists at the South African Public Library to look forward to the development and maturity of a local literary marketplace. As exemplars of 'serious' fiction, they were also represented as civilising agents, imparting instruction about how to read and behave to the Cape colonists. Eliot's cultural status also influenced one of the best-known South African authors of the nineteenth century, Olive Schreiner. Whilst Thornie and Bertie's challenging colonial careers ended in their deaths, Eliot's cultural influence upon the Cape colonists lived on in the Library, which housed

them and circulated them. Thus while 'bad' colonists may have passed away, and left little impression upon the settled territories of South Africa, literature left a longer-lasting imprint on South Africa's cultural and intellectual sphere.

2. The Colonial Periodical Press

This chapter charts the formation of the English-speaking periodical press in the Cape Colony, and explores how it engaged with and articulated the central themes of this thesis – white belonging and unsettlement, the growth of colonial nationalism, and the links between knowledge, national identity and belonging. I take my cue from Mastin Prinsloo and argue that print literacy and the development of the print industry in the Cape Colony ‘was not simply transplanted in the African context to do its work [...] but was translated, interpreted, recontextualised and re-embedded in a range of ways by local people’.¹⁸⁶ This exploration of how white settlers embedded their literary culture and practices in the Cape Colony will be undertaken in four sections. The first sets the historical scene and explores how the colonists expressed the tension between their dual sense of identity as British subjects and as South Africans. The second section investigates how the bourgeois colonial elite presented themselves in a locally produced periodical, the *Cape Monthly Magazine*. In particular, this section focuses on how the colonists’ intellectual explorations of the new landscape in which they found themselves contributed to a sense of domesticating the Cape Colony and encouraging a feeling of white control and belonging.

This chapter also explores the colonists’ literary connections with England, and uses the fact that the Cape Colony was a site of intersection between metropolitan and colonial culture to analyse the reciprocal relationship between South African and English literature. This is achieved through a close analysis of the *Cape Monthly Magazine*’s response to the metropolitan authors that are the focus of the other chapters of this thesis – George Eliot and Anthony Trollope. I demonstrate that the colonists found it uncomfortable to view themselves through Trollope’s critical gaze. The reviews of Eliot’s work focus on her technical skills as a writer, and the philosophical expertise that she expresses through her characters. The writer creates an overview of Eliot’s literature and poetry and

¹⁸⁶ Mastin Prinsloo, 'Literacy and Land at the Bay of Natal: Documents and Practices across Spaces and Social Economies', in *Written Culture in a Colonial Context: Africa and the Americas, 1500-1900*, ed. by Adrien Delmas and Nigel Penn, (Cape Town: UCT Press, 2011), pp. 247 - 266 (p. 249). Similarly, Gary Magee and Andrew S. Thompson argue that the colonies were not ‘passive recipients of empire’ but rather active participants in the creation and maintenance of local, British-influenced, ways of life (*Empire and Globalisation*, p.31).

uses the reviews to flex their intellectual muscle, demonstrating their awareness of advancements in popular science, and using this knowledge to frame their response to George Eliot's work. The last section of the chapter turns from the dominant masculine narratives of 'taming' the landscape to consider feminine forms of literacy in the Cape of Good Hope.

A brief history of the periodical press in the Cape Colony

In 1823 the Controller of Customs at the Cape Colony, William Wilberforce Bird, published a survey of the state of the Cape of Good Hope in which he lamented the fettered state of the press. He wrote:

The liberty of the press is a feeling so congenial to the heart of a British subject, that it is mortifying to describe such a degraded establishment as the government printing office at the Cape of Good Hope.¹⁸⁷

The printing office he refers to published one publication, the *Cape Town Gazette and African Advertiser*, which was a government mouthpiece that printed proclamations and notices, shipping intelligence, adverts, and a small amount of overseas news.¹⁸⁸ Bird went on to complain that the only foreign news that was reprinted by the government printing office was that which was 'suited to the submissive state of the colony'. He also suggested that parliamentary debates were not reproduced in the Cape's press because they might ignite opposition toward the local Colonial administration, then headed by Lord Charles Somerset (Bird, p.59). In the Controller of Customs' opinion, the press in the Cape participated in the restriction of the British subject's right to free speech and collaborated with the Colonial government to keep the populace ill-informed of their activities. Bird went on to outline the benefits of a free press:

¹⁸⁷ William Wilberforce Bird, *State of the Cape of Good Hope, 1822*, ed. by Henry Thomas Colebrooke, (London: John Murray, 1823), p. 58. Bird was William Wilberforce's cousin, and it is speculated that Wilberforce helped to secure Bird's position in the Cape so that he could spread the anti-slavery campaign in the colony. (Alan F. Hattersley, 'Bird, William Wilberforce', in *Dictionary of South African Biography*, ed. by W. J. de Kock, 5 vols (Pretoria: Nasional Boekhandel Bpk. for National Council for Social Research, 1968 - 1987) 1, pp. 77 - 78.)

¹⁸⁸ A.M. Lewin Robinson, *None Daring to Make Us Afraid: A Study of English Periodical Literature in the Cape Colony from Its Beginnings in 1824 to 1835*, (Cape Town: Maskew Miller, 1962), p. 3.

A free press, bearing hard upon the vices and absurdities of mankind, is the grand corrective of the present times. It holds up infamy to contempt and scorn, and marks out folly for derision. It awes oppression, and bestows on merit the reward of public regard. It improves the morals, assists the cause of virtue and religion, and guides the taste of society [...] The freedom of the press was the means through which English liberty survived the house of Stuart [...] (Bird, p.60).

This explicit linkage between a free press and the creation of a white civilised society gains deeper significance when this dynamic is located in a British colony overseas, in which the English-speaking population was outnumbered by the Dutch, their Malay slaves and indigenous African people. In Bird's eyes, the benefits bestowed by the press's role as a commentator and moral regulator outweighed the dangers of potentially unsettling the Colonial government.

William Bird's book anticipated the confrontation that took place between the Colonial government and those lobbying for an uncensored press in the Cape. Press censorship was not unusual in the British colonies. For example, an 1827 Act of Council in Australia required newspaper publishers to pay sureties as a demonstration of good faith that they would not publish anything controversial.¹⁸⁹ However, press censorship was particularly strictly maintained in the Cape by Lord Somerset. He feared that a free press would emulate journals like the *Calcutta Journal* in India, which had published articles criticising the East India Company and the government of Bengal.¹⁹⁰ Lord Somerset's repressive attitude toward the establishment of a free press in the Cape Colony set the scene for a confrontation which would establish the Cape's first literary periodical at odds with the Colonial administration.

The birth of the Cape Colony's commercial English-language press took place in the 1820's, and coincided with the arrival of a large number of English settlers (Dubow, *Commonwealth*, pp.26 - 27). Amongst them were two Scotsmen, Thomas Pringle and John Fairbairn, who arrived in the Cape in 1820 and 1823 respectively. Letters between them, in which Pringle encouraged his friend Fairbairn to emigrate, reveal that they wished to 'enlighten South Africa' by founding a literary

¹⁸⁹ 'An Act for Preventing the Mischiefs Arising from the Printing and Publishing Newspapers [...]', in *Australian Almanack, for the Year of Our Lord, 1831*, (Sydney: Ralph Mansfield, 1831), pp. 52 - 53.

¹⁹⁰ Lord Charles Somerset to Robert Wilmot-Horton, 14 February 1823, George McCall Theal, *Records of the Cape Colony: From August 1822 to May 1823*, 35 vols (Cape Town: Printed for the Government of the Cape Colony, 1903), XV, pp. 266 - 267; G. F. R. Barker, 'Buckingham, James Silk (1786–1855)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004, <<http://0-www.oxforddnb.com.catalogue.urls.lon.ac.uk/view/article/3855?docPos=1>> [accessed 14 October 2015].

periodical in which they could stimulate discussions about local natural history, the sciences and literature. Their emphasis was on exploring the ‘unknown kingdoms [...] unknown streams and nameless mountains’ of the Cape, which they, as ‘rational men’ who had benefitted from a European education were well-qualified to do.¹⁹¹ Their periodical, later titled the *South African Journal*, was modelled on *Blackwood’s Edinburgh Magazine*, which Pringle had edited for a short while when it was first conceived as the *Edinburgh Monthly Magazine* (Pringle, *Narrative*, p.xv). The *South African Journal* inherited *Blackwood’s* miscellaneous content structure, and the editors planned to feature articles on ‘education and manners [...] Agriculture and the Arts’ and ‘interesting summaries of Religious, Literary and Statistical Intelligence’.¹⁹² It was to have a sister journal in Dutch, *Het Nederduitsch Zuid-Afrikaansch Tijdschrift*, edited by Reverend Abraham Faure, and also geared toward the ‘instruction of his countrymen’ (Pringle, *Narrative*, p.191).¹⁹³ The *South African Journal* and *Het Nederduitsch Zuid-Afrikaansch Tijdschrift* would be published in alternate months. Their founders imagined that the journals would be culturally inclusive of the two white populations in the Cape at the time, and the magazines were envisaged as a means of moral and intellectual instruction amongst this select group of people.

Once again, literature and reading were rhetorically linked to the civilisation of the Cape’s colonial population, this time in the context of the press, the producer of such morally-elevating texts. In February 1824 Pringle and Faure formally requested permission to publish their journal, and used the language of utilitarianism to support their application. Firstly they pointed out that periodicals had been disseminating ‘Useful knowledge’ throughout Europe since the mid-eighteenth

¹⁹¹ John Fairbairn letter to Thomas Pringle, 2 March 1823. Reproduced in Thomas Pringle, *Narrative of a Residence in South Africa*, (London: Edward Moxon, 1835), pp. 189 - 190. In the same letter, Fairbairn calls himself and Pringle potential ‘Franklins of the *Kaap*’. Kirsten McKenzie has read this as a reference to Benjamin Franklin and an expression of a desire to found a ‘public sphere’ in which South African politics could develop (McKenzie, ‘Franklins’). Saul Dubow has also read this as a reference to the American, and links it to the formation of a sense of nationhood in the Cape (Dubow, *Commonwealth*, p.33). However, Randolph Vigne convincingly contradicts this reading by suggesting that Fairbairn is actually referring to Sir John Franklin, the arctic explorer who had returned from his expedition the previous year. This is a better fit with the context of the quote in the rest of the letter, and Fairbairn’s repeated references to exploring the unknown features of the Cape. (Randolph Vigne, *Thomas Pringle: South African Pioneer, Poet and Abolitionist*, (Woodbridge ; Rochester, N.Y.: James Currey, 2012), p. 119.)

¹⁹² ‘Prospectus’, reprinted in Robinson, *None Daring*, p.246.

¹⁹³ See also Peter D. McDonald, *The Literature Police: Apartheid Censorship and Its Cultural Consequences*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), p. 9.

century. Then they claimed that ‘every other British colony of any importance possesses Periodical works in active circulation’. The prospective editors acknowledged Somerset’s concern that the press could potentially cause injury to the Colonial administration, and promised not to print articles about ‘controversial or agitating’ topics. Finally Pringle and Faure concluded their letter by emphasising the role that the periodical press could play in promoting the ‘diffusion of knowledge, piety and civilization’ throughout the Cape (reprinted in Robinson, *None Daring*, p.245, also in *Records of the Cape*, XV, p.263). The prospective editors of the *South African Journal* positioned their journal as an indicator of the Cape’s cultural and intellectual development, as well as its status within the British Empire. Including the phrase ‘South African’ in both the English and Dutch titles also indicated Pringle’s and Faure’s ambition to foster a sense of nationhood amongst all of the readers in Cape Colony. Thus, in addition to uniting Dutch and English readers in common readership in Cape Town, the editors clearly wished to extend this elite white rational sphere to the rest of the colony.

Initially, Lord Somerset did not respond favourably to their application, and he was only persuaded to cede to their request in December 1824 after Lord Bathurst, the Secretary of State for War and Colonies, intervened on the colonists’ behalf (Pringle, *Narrative*, p.193). Another prospective printer, George Grieg took this as an indication that he could establish the Cape’s first independent English-language newspaper in the Cape, the *South African Commercial Advertiser*. In January 1825, the first issues of both the *South African Journal* and the *South African Commercial Advertiser* were published in the Cape Colony. Louise Henri Meurant, who worked as an apprentice at the *South African Commercial Advertiser*, reported that its publications caused a ‘great sensation’. Crowds of people filled the street outside the printing house, and additional copies of the newspaper had to be produced to keep up with demand.¹⁹⁴ Pringle also reported that the *South African Journal* was ‘warmly welcomed by a respectable body of subscribers’ (Pringle, *Narrative*, p.194). This respectable body of subscribers was in fact rather small, comprising 130 people in Cape Town and a further 120 in the outlying towns

¹⁹⁴ Louis Henri Meurant, *Sixty Years Ago; or Reminiscences of the Struggle for the Freedom of the Press in South Africa and the Establishment of the First Newspaper in the Eastern Province*, (Cape Town: Saul Solomon and Co., 1885), p. 21.

inland and along the coast (Robinson, *None Daring*, p.25).¹⁹⁵ However, the dispute between Somerset and Grieg, Pringle, Fairbairn and Faure made reading the Colony's new literary productions 'fashionable' and kept them in demand amongst the colonists.¹⁹⁶ The popularity of the new newspaper and literary journal vindicated their editors' claims that the colonial population of Cape Town was sufficiently developed to be able to support the production and dissemination of textual commodities.

However, the *South African Commercial Advertiser* and the *South African Journal* were both forced to suspend publication after Lord Somerset took 'umbrage' at articles published in both publications (Pringle, *Narrative*, p.195). In May 1824, the *South African Commercial Advertiser* printed a law report about a case in which the plaintiff made offensive and scandalous remarks about Lord Somerset (Robinson, *None Daring*, p.29, Pringle, *Narrative*, p.197).¹⁹⁷ The *South African Journal* had also printed extracts from Bird's *State of the Cape*, which criticised the status of the press in the Cape and pointed out maladministration by the Colonial government (Hattersley, *Illustrated History*, p. 139). Pringle and Fairbairn responded to Somerset's interventions by discontinuing the magazine and the newspaper (which they had taken over the editorship of) and drawing up a petition to the King in Council, requesting freedom of the press which they circulated throughout the Cape. In the petition they once again couched their literary aims in the language of nationhood, arguing that along with the diffusion of knowledge, the free press would encourage 'the gradual amalgamation into one people and character of all classes of His Majesty's subjects' and claiming that the free press was the 'birthright' of all Englishmen ('Petition for a Free Press' in *Records*, XVII, pp.362 – 367). The unsettling hybridity of British-South African colonial identity caused Pringle and Fairbairn to appeal to the British

¹⁹⁵ Subscription figures for the *South African Commercial Advertiser* are not available, although Grieg writes to Bathurst that circulation doubled in the first 3 months of publication. 'Letter from Mr. George Greig to Earl Bathurst', in George McCall Theal, *Records of the Cape Colony: From January to June 1824*, 35 vols (Cape Town: Printed for the Government of the Cape Colony, 1903), XVII, p. 236.

¹⁹⁶ George Thompson, *Travels and Adventures in Southern Africa*, (London: Henry Colburn, 1827), p. 385. Thompson was a contributor to the first two editions of the *South African Commercial Advertiser* on the 7th and the 14th of January 1824. (Hendrik Christoffel Botha, *John Fairbairn in South Africa*, (Cape Town: Historical Publication Society, 1984), p. 18.)

¹⁹⁷ It was claimed that Lord Somerset was involved in a homosexual relationship with his personal physician, James Barry, who, it was also speculated, was an hermaphrodite (McKenzie, *Scandal in the Colonies*, pp.3 – 4).

administration to protect their rights as British subjects so that they could use the press to further the ends of inter-colonial bonding between the English and Dutch settlers.

It should be noted at this point that *Het Nederduitsch Zuid-Afrikaansch Tijdschrift* had managed to avoid Somerset's attentions, and continued to be published uninterrupted until 1843 (Robinson, *None Daring*, p.34 and p.67). This was probably due to the fact that it was published in Dutch, and so avoided the colonial administration's attentions. The content of the *Het Nederduitsch Zuid-Afrikaansch Tijdschrift* also had a stronger theological emphasis than the politicised *South African Journal*. Faure also clearly wanted to avoid Somerset's displeasure, as he refrained from signing the free press petition in May 1824 (*Records*, XVII, pp.362-367). The confrontation between the three founders of the English-language press in the colony and the Colonial Governor therefore destabilised rather than amalgamated white colonial identity, creating an ideological division between Dutch and English readers and producers of textual commodities, in addition to creating tension amongst the English speakers who identified themselves as British, yet found themselves in conflict with the representative of the British Government, Lord Somerset. This sense of dislocated identity, of claiming entitlement to British civil liberties whilst living in an overseas colony and simultaneously attempting to develop a feeling of colonial nationalism amongst the populace was to become a theme underlying the activities of the press in the Cape Colony throughout the nineteenth century.

Despite only existing for a few months in early 1824, the *South African Journal* and the *South African Commercial Advertiser* would leave a lasting effect on the literary history of the Cape Colony. By establishing a formal print industry in the Cape, the *South African Journal* and the *South African Commercial Advertiser* became models for future newspapers and literary periodicals. These models were themselves based on a British literary tradition and so they began to mould South Africa's intellectual sphere within an existing framework of British values and literary standards. From a legal perspective, the conflict between Pringle, Grieg, Fairbairn and Lord Somerset eventually resulted in legislative reform when the colonial press was removed from executive control under Cape Ordinance 60 of 1829 (McDonald, p.9, Hattersley, *Social History*, p.140). In addition to the legal implications of the confrontation, the face-off between the colonists and the colonial government, and the attempt to establish an intellectual and political network in the Cape 'served notice of the

tentative emergence of a self-conscious English-speaking colonial community in the Cape' (Dubow, *Commonwealth*, p.34). This English-speaking community was negotiating its relationship with the numerically dominant white Dutch population and together they were tentatively fashioning themselves as 'South Africans', separated by language but united in the desire to foster a sense of belonging and colonial pride in a foreign landscape.

Masculine readership – *The Cape Monthly Magazine* and periodicity

The English-speaking community in the Cape increasingly found expression in local periodicals and newspapers following the advent of press freedom. The *South African Commercial Advertiser* was resumed under John Fairbairn's sole editorship, and he attempted to use his position to guide the cultural taste and moral development of the Cape.¹⁹⁸ As the colony grew and developed, the colonists' self-awareness of their status in the circuits of the British Empire increased, and they used their printed commodities as a platform to formulate their political character and project to the rest of the empire. By advertising their maturity, the English-speaking Cape colonists could attract monetary investment and new colonists, whilst at the same time continuing to explore and debate their own fledgling sense of identity (McKenzie, 'Franklins', p.102; Holdridge, 'Sam Sly' and Holdridge, 'Circulating'). The small cohort of English writers, publishers and readers of the literary products of the Cape produced a sense of community that was both imagined and real, and was encouraged by the interconnectedness of the cultural and literary institutions of the Cape (Anderson; Dubow, *Commonwealth*, p.72).

From the 1820's until the 1850's the Cape Colony's political state of flux was mirrored by the print industry's unsettled state. Between 1824 and 1855, 17 English and Dutch newspapers were founded, most of which were short-lived (the *South African Commercial Advertiser* and *Het Nederduitsch*

¹⁹⁸ McKenzie, 'Franklins' and Kirsten McKenzie, "'My Own Mind Dying within Me": Eliza Fairbairn and the Reinvention of Colonial Middle-Class Domesticity in Cape Town', *South African Historical Journal*, 36. 1 (1997), pp. 3 - 23.

Zuid-Afrikaansch Tijdschrift were the longest-running publications).¹⁹⁹ The so-called 'Convict Crisis' of the late 1840's, which was discussed in the Introduction of this thesis, has been credited as a turning point in the Cape's history. United by a common goal, and spurred on by the Cape's newspapers and magazines, the Dutch and English colonists joined forces in the protests against becoming a penal colony (Dubow, *Commonwealth*, p.62-63; Ross, p.161). The local press, led by John Fairbairn in particular, was instrumental in publicising Lord Grey's plans to import convicts into the Cape. The *South African Commercial Advertiser* along with newer titles such as the *Cape Town Mail*, the *Cape of Good Hope Observer*, the *Shopkeepers' and Tradesmen's Journal* and the Dutch *Zuid Afrikaan* all printed articles informing their readers of developments and encouraging them to attend meetings of the Anti-Convict Association (Hattersley, *Convict Crisis*, p.42 – 47). The solidarity created amongst the colonists in conflict with the colonial government recreated Thomas Pringle's clash with Lord Somerset, albeit on a larger scale. The increasing sense of colonial nationalism and South African identity amongst the white settlers furthered their sense of belonging and settlement in the Cape.

The protest against transforming the Cape Colony into a penal colony had pitted the colonial elites of both languages against the British elites in England. Their success in turning away the convict ship led to a campaign for increasing colonial autonomy, which in turn developed into a movement for representative government. This was granted in 1853, and by the mid-1850's the Cape of Good Hope was relatively politically stable. As a result, the Cape's economy experienced a boom phase due to increasing foreign investment, easier access to credit, and the growth of the sheep farming industry in the Eastern Cape. The favourable economic position resulted in the expansion of the mercantile classes, and so the literary market was ripe for another attempt at a local high-brow literary periodical.²⁰⁰

In January 1857, the *Cape Monthly Magazine* was founded in Cape Town under the editorship of two Britons, Alfred Whaley Cole and Roderick Noble. It was a monthly literary periodical and the

¹⁹⁹ 'Cape Town Newspapers in the South African Library', *Quarterly Bulletin of the South African Library*, 1. (1946 – 1947), p. 70.

²⁰⁰ Matthew Shum, 'Writing Settlement and Empire: The Cape after 1820', in *The Cambridge History of South African Literature*, ed. by David Attwell and Derek Attridge, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), pp. 185 - 203 (p. 199); James Belich, *Replenishing the Earth: The Settler Revolution and the Rise of the Angloworld, 1783-1939*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), p. 375.

first series ran from 1857 to 1862. After a brief interruption due to financial difficulties, the magazine was resumed for a second series from 1870 to 1881 (Dubow, *Commonwealth*, p.74). Although certainly not the first literary journal that was produced in the Cape Colony, it was the most ambitious, and was the first to establish a long-standing run.²⁰¹ In what follows, I use an article published in the *Cape Monthly Magazine* in July 1861 titled 'First Impressions: Homeward Bound' to explore the relationship between colonial and metropolitan literary cultures.²⁰² Part of a series of articles depicting fictional representations of a newcomer's initial experiences in Cape Town, this particular article describes how the arrival and departure of the mail steamers shaped and regulated the Cape's social rhythms. I use this article to argue that the arrival of the mail steamers in the Cape functioned as a colonial 'Magazine Day', transplanting urban metropolitan temporal markers into a colonial context. The shared experience within the Colony of not only waiting for the steamer to arrive, but also of preparing for its departure, helped to foster a sense of 'temporal symmetry', which strengthened the ties of community within Cape Town's population.²⁰³ The Cape's emerging print industry, which is evidenced by the inception and production of the *Cape Monthly Magazine*, thus acted as a second 'Magazine Day' – readers would have waited for their monthly edition of the *Magazine*, whilst also waiting for the arrival of the mail steamers. The mail steamers therefore functioned much like the mail coaches in England, connecting isolated communities to London, whilst also allowing them the space to create and preserve their own distinct literary identities.²⁰⁴

The *Cape Monthly Magazine's* longevity was, in part, a result of the previous literary experience of its editors. Alfred Whaley Cole, who prior to relocating permanently to the Cape had been on friendly terms with Charles Dickens and William Makepeace Thackeray, published a series of four

²⁰¹ Brian D. Cheadle, 'Southern Africa', in *Periodicals of Queen Victoria's Empire: An Exploration*, ed. by J. Don Vann and Rosemary T. Van Arsdell, (London: Mansell, 1996), pp. 242 - 296 (p. 266).

²⁰² 'First Impressions: Homeward Bound', *Cape Monthly Magazine*, July 1861, pp. 42 - 49.

²⁰³ Eviatar Zerubavel, *Hidden Rhythms: Schedules and Calendars in Social Life*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1981), p. 65.

²⁰⁴ Ruth Livesey, 'Communicating with Jane Eyre: Stagecoach, Mail, and the 'Tory Nation'', *Victorian Studies*, 53. 4 (2011), pp. 615-638 (p. 632).

'Cape Sketches' in *Household Words* between September and November 1850.²⁰⁵ They were based on his experiences of living in the Cape for five years after being shipwrecked there on his way to New Zealand, and he expanded upon them in a book titled *The Cape and the Kafirs: Notes of Five Years' Residence in South Africa*.²⁰⁶ Cole also wrote a number of fiction and non-fiction works to supplement his earnings as a barrister whilst living in London between 1846 and 1856 (Hattersley, 'Cole', p.136-137). Roderick Noble was also a published author, having contributed articles to the *Inverness Advertiser* between 1849 and 1850 whilst working as a school teacher.²⁰⁷ It can thus be assumed that both men brought their experiences of British literary and print culture to bear on the production of the *Cape Monthly*.

Indeed, the *Magazine's* British literary inheritance is clear in both its structure and content, in which it replicates a number of traits of its British predecessors. The first series of the *Cape Monthly Magazine* was bound within a dove-grey cover, and bore an illustration showing ships moored in Table Bay with Table Mountain in the background (*Cape Monthly Magazine*, January 1857, pp.1-2). The ships in the Bay are quite clearly suggestive of the Colony's participation in imperial networks of trade, communication and transportation. The image of Table Mountain, apart from providing a useful framing function within the illustration, is also symbolic. Jessica Dubow has demonstrated that presenting Cape Town, and Table Mountain in particular, through the eyes of a newcomer seeing the Colony for the first time is a recurring motif within the contributions to the *Cape Monthly Magazine*, as well as in travellers' diaries. She argues that this literary trope functions as a 'moment of cultural confirmation', reaffirming both fictional and real travellers' arrival in the Cape through the physicality and startling geometry of Table Mountain, which would have dominated their first sight of the town.²⁰⁸ Saul Dubow develops this idea of the cultural confirmation of arrival by assessing the

²⁰⁵ Alan F. Hattersley, 'Cole, Alfred Whaley', in *Dictionary of South African Biography*, ed. by W. J. de Kock and D. W. Krüger, 2 vols (Pretoria: Tafelberg-Uitgewers, 1972) 2, pp. 136 - 137. Alfred Whaley Cole, *Reminiscences of My Life and of the Cape Bench and Bar*, (Cape Town: J.C. Juta, 1896), pp. 2 - 3.

²⁰⁶ Alfred Whaley Cole, *The Cape and the Kafirs: Or, Notes of Five Years' Residence in South Africa*, (London: Richard Bentley, 1852).

²⁰⁷ Rene Ferdinand Malan Immelman, 'Noble, Roderick', in *Dictionary of South African Biography*, ed. by W. J. de Kock and D. W. Krüger, 2 vols (Pretoria: Tafelberg-Uitgewers, 1972) 2, pp. 518 - 519.

²⁰⁸ Jessica Dubow, 'Colonial Space, Colonial Identity: Perception and the South African Landscape', (unpublished doctoral thesis, Royal Holloway, University of London, 2000), p. 18. Jessica Dubow, 'Rites of

changing nature of the representation of Table Mountain and the Cape's landscape throughout the nineteenth century:

Whereas records of ascents during the first British occupation lay stress on conquest and mastery of a new imperial domain, by mid-century the wild mountain had been symbolically 'domesticated', as climbers embarked on day excursions and held tea parties on the summit (Dubow, *Commonwealth*, p.84)

The *Cape Monthly Magazine's* cover image therefore introduces a number of themes that would come to dominate the contents of the publication – imperial networks of communication set within a colonial landscape which needed to be domesticated by its British conquerors.

The foregrounding of the *Cape Monthly Magazine's* British heritage which is implied by its cover would have continued when its readers opened its pages. In both typography and layout, the *Cape Monthly Magazine* was modelled on comparable British literary periodicals which were available in the South African Public Library in Cape Town.²⁰⁹ Its single column format was an indicator of its ambitions to be a 'serious' literary periodical.²¹⁰ Unlike its British counterparts, the *Cape Monthly Magazine* wasn't technologically sophisticated enough to have illustrations printed within the text. Nevertheless, certainly in terms of appearance and structure, the *Cape Monthly Magazine* can be seen to be striving to keep up with the metropolitan magazines that influenced it.

The content of the *Cape Monthly Magazine* also closely aligned it to its British models. Like the periodicals that Noble reviewed every month in his 'Literary Review' articles, the *Cape Monthly Magazine* was a miscellany – combining 'amusement with information and affording equal space to literature, science, the fine arts, and commercial and statistical intelligence'.²¹¹ However, despite the obvious influence of British literary culture on the *Cape Monthly Magazine*, it was not merely an imitator of British periodicals. Whilst the *Cape Monthly Magazine* admittedly acted as an intermediary

Passage: 'Travel and the Materiality of Vision at the Cape of Good Hope', in *Contested Landscapes : Movement, Exile and Place*, ed. by Barbara Bender and Margot Winer, (Oxford: Berg, 2001), pp. 241 - 255 (p. 245).

²⁰⁹ Roderick Noble, 'Literary Review', *Cape Monthly Magazine*, January 1862, pp. 52 - 56 (p. 53).

²¹⁰ Laurel Brake, 'Columns', in *Dictionary of Nineteenth-Century Journalism in Great Britain and Ireland*, ed. by Laurel Brake and Marysa Demoor, (London: Academia Press and The British Library, 2009), pp. 134 - 135. Brake states that single column format was a tactic used by literary periodicals to visually distance themselves from ephemeral, news-based fortnightlys, weeklies and dailies.

²¹¹ Alfred Whaley Cole and Roderick Noble, 'Address', *Cape Monthly Magazine*, January 1857, pp. 1 - 2 (p. 2). Annotations in the *Cape Monthly Magazine* at the National Library of South Africa in Cape Town attribute the literary reviews to Noble, while Cole seems to have been responsible for writing more imaginative pieces of literature for the magazine.

between London and the Cape, keeping its readers '*au courant*' with London's literary world, Cole and Noble also emphasised the importance of local contributions (Noble, 'Literary Review', January 1862, p.53). They explicitly linked locally produced literature to the Anglo-civilisation, moral development, and intellectual progress of the Cape Colony:

On all sides we hear of prosperity and progress in things material, though, with characteristic John-Bullism, we still grumble a little because we do not move as fast as we should. But, while careering down the material road, need we forget the intellectual? A community that gives no sign of even a nascent literature of its own, is still far from civilization. Wealth may accumulate, but mind decay [...] ('Address', p.1).

The development of a local English-language literary community, structured within pre-existing and imported British frameworks, was therefore integral to advancing the intellectual and moral development of the Cape Colony.

Indeed, Cole and Noble regularly took the opportunity to remind their subscribers and contributors of the importance of home-grown literature. Local contributors were frequently thanked in editorial pieces within the *Cape Monthly Magazine*, and the Editors encouraged the submission of topical articles of domestic interest.²¹² As a result, short stories set in the Cape shared printed space with poetry, as well as with non-fiction articles about local flora, fauna and geology, along with regular features such as the Literary Review and Commercial and Meteorological Reports.²¹³ In addition to being of local origins, the contents of the *Cape Monthly Magazine* also had to be well-written and intellectually robust. For instance, in a humorous review of some of the rejected contributions to the *Cape Monthly Magazine*, Alfred Whaley Cole has this to say about the Colony's less-skilled authors:

For, strange as it may seem to them, there is positively romance, positively sentiment, positively poetry in plain, truthful, every-day life, in this nineteenth century, and in this very city of Cape Town.²¹⁴

Cole here seems to be gesturing toward George Eliot's realist manifesto, her essay 'The Natural History of German life' which had been published a year previously in the *Westminster Review*, in which she champions truthful, realistic representations of everyday life and people (Eliot, 'Natural History').

²¹² Alfred Whaley Cole and Roderick Noble, 'Preface', *Cape Monthly Magazine*, January 1857, p. i.

²¹³ 'Contents', *Cape Monthly Magazine*, January 1857.

²¹⁴ Alfred Whaley Cole, 'Rejected Contributions', *Cape Monthly Magazine*, April 1857, pp. 212 - 219 (p. 218).

The editors of the *Cape Monthly Magazine* therefore apply English literary standards and expectations to colonial literary productions, placing the magazine in dialogue not only with its readers and contributors, but also with the literature of home, England.

In addition to strenuously encouraging the development of home-grown literature, the editors of the *Cape Monthly Magazine* also displayed an interest in trans-colonial developments. While articles about the Americas and Canada were infrequent, the editors seem to have been primarily interested in Australia, perhaps because of its similarity in terms of climate and landscape, and its geographical location in the southern hemisphere.²¹⁵ Articles which compared South Africa's agricultural and mineral output to Australia's were featured in the magazine fairly often, and Australians were frequently referred to as 'brother colonists' and 'colonial brothers'.²¹⁶ These inter-colonial comparisons served to bolster the Cape colonists' self-confidence. For example, in May 1857, a 'General Summary' article noted that the Cape's wool sales for February of that year had surpassed Australia's ('General Summary', May 1857, p.325). In another article the author, James Robinson, argues that the discovery of gold in Australia had forced the colony into an 'unnaturally progressive condition', which resulted in an 'unstable' constitution.²¹⁷ Robinson also characterised the other British colonies of Mauritius, Ceylon, the West Indies and India as commercially useful, but unsuited to colonial settlement (p.94). Trans-colonial comparisons therefore reinforced South Africa's prestige as a 'good' settlement colony, as it was economically productive and capable of sustaining a British settler population.

²¹⁵ References to India are also relatively infrequent in the *Cape Monthly Magazine*. However, for more on the relationship and historical connections between South Africa and India in the nineteenth and twentieth-centuries, see Hofmeyr (ed.), *South Africa and India*.

²¹⁶ Two articles published in August and November of 1877 also made extensive comparisons between Australia and the Cape Colony in terms of population, legislature and agricultural productivity (F.W.R, 'Colonial Comparisons', *Cape Monthly Magazine*, August 1877, pp. 116 - 121; F.W.R, 'Colonial Comparisons', *Cape Monthly Magazine*, November 1877, pp. 295 - 297.) For references to Australian and South African colonial brotherhood, see 'Commercial Review', *Cape Monthly Magazine*, August 1857, pp. 115 - 117 (p. 116); 'Southward Ho!', *Cape Monthly Magazine*, January 1860, pp. 37 - 48 (p. 38).

²¹⁷ John Robinson, 'Colonization', *Cape Monthly Magazine*, July 1857, pp. 88 - 94 (p. 94). Robinson was very active in the Cape's print industry, and would later become the first Prime Minister of Natal (M. C. van Zyl, 'Robinson, Sir John', in *Dictionary of South African Biography*, ed. by W. J. de Kock, 5 vols (Pretoria: Nasional Boekhandel Bpk. for National Council for Social Research, 1968 - 1987) 1, pp. 675 - 676.)

South Africa's interest in Australia was reciprocated, as a number of articles from the *Cape Monthly Magazine* were reprinted in Australian publications.²¹⁸ This supports Magee and Thompson's suggestion that the development of communication technologies and networks in the nineteenth century functioned as "cultural glue", shoring up British identity in settler communities, and widening colonists' awareness that their experiences were shared across the British Empire (Magee and Thompson, *Empire and Globalisation*, p.27 – 28).²¹⁹ This sense of colonial brotherhood across the empire forms the basis of Alan Lester's research into how imperial communication networks allowed British settlers in Australia, New Zealand and the Cape Colony to 'co-construct a particular, trans-imperial discourse of colonialism'.²²⁰ He posits that settler newspapers bound British colonists across the empire together, as they cooperated to protest against metropolitan criticisms of their political and 'native' policies (p.32 and pp.39 – 41). This can be seen in Robinson's article in the *Cape Monthly Magazine*, in which he complains that it had been the 'custom of the home administration to treat the colonists with a certain degree of contempt, and to refuse them those privileges and rights which were enjoyed by their fellow-countrymen in the fatherland [...]' (Robinson, 'Colonization', p.92). He protests that colonists are perceived by the metropole as being 'lower grade' British subjects, and argues that:

If they had in any way degenerated in their moral and mental faculties, there might be ground for this feeling, but such is not the case; if any change has taken place it has been in the upward scale (p.93).

Robinson affirms the 'ennobling and elevating' influence that the natural and uncorrupted colonial landscape has upon colonists, and criticises the 'indigence and vice' and 'filth and beggary' which

²¹⁸ See for example 'Review: The *Cape Monthly Magazine*', *South Australian Register*, 28 January 1859, <<http://trove.nla.gov.au/ndp/del/article/49904148?searchTerm=%22Cape%20Monthly%20Magazine%22&searchLimits=dateTo=1881-12-31||dateFrom=1857-01-01||sortBy=dateAsc>> [accessed 3 September 2014]; 'Cape of Good Hope', *South Australian Register*, 18 April 1859,

<<http://trove.nla.gov.au/ndp/del/article/49899589?searchTerm=%22Cape%20Monthly%20Magazine%22&searchLimits=dateTo=1881-12-31||dateFrom=1857-01-01||sortBy=dateAsc>> [accessed 3 September 2014].

²¹⁹ See also Duncan S. A. Bell, 'Dissolving Distance: Technology, Space, and Empire in British Political Thought, 1770–1900', *The Journal of Modern History*, 77. 3 (2005), pp. 523 - 562. Although Bell does not consider South Africa in this paper, arguing that its relationship to the British Empire was 'complex', his investigation into how the geographical distance between metropolitan London and the colonies affected imperial policy is enlightening.

²²⁰ Alan Lester, 'British Settler Discourse and the Circuits of Empire', *History Workshop Journal*, 54. 1 (2002), pp. 24 - 48 (p. 25).

characterise British cities (p.93). Thus despite being critical of Australia's artificially accelerated progress, Robinson nevertheless uses the trope of colonial brotherhood to defend the status of British subjects abroad, and to criticise metropolitan Britain's corruption and social decay.

Despite his criticisms of England, Robinson still positions it as 'home' and the 'fatherland' (Robinson, 'Colonization', p.92). The figuring of England as 'home' and a parental figure pervades the pages of the first series of the *Cape Monthly Magazine*. For instance, in his reviews of new books and journals recently delivered to the Colony by the mail steamers, Roderick Noble describes himself taking a 'glance at the literary productions of the mother country' ('Literary Review', Jan 1862, p.52). An anonymous contributor to the February 1858 edition of the *Cape Monthly Magazine* lists the various names by which the inhabitants of the Cape refer to the United Kingdom – 'Old England, The Fatherland, Land O'Cakes, or the Emerald Isle'.²²¹ The author puts this down to a lack of amalgamation amongst the wide range of nationalities in the Cape. It is also a symptom of the increasing overt anglicisation of the Colony, as the English language and the institutions of English rule were imposed upon what had previously been a Dutch Colony (Sturgis, p.5). This overt institutional anglicisation was supplemented with a more subtle cultural anglicisation, as English sports, hobbies and cultural activities gradually filtered into the colony, via the mail steamers, which brought English books, letters, and emigrants to the Cape (Bickford-Smith, 'Revisiting Anglicisation', p.83). The communicative network created by the mail steamers thus created an environment in which the colonists never went too long without news from 'home', and from other British colonial territories. However, as I shall argue, the time lags and delays associated with ocean mail, and which mimicked the periodicity of the periodical press in London, also gave the colonists space to develop their own literature and culture, influenced by London, yet independent and self-sufficient.

²²¹ 'The New Educational Tests', *Cape Monthly Magazine*, February 1858, pp. 88 - 94 (p. 89).

'First Impressions: Homeward Bound'

The influence of the mail steamer's delays and time lags, and the importance that the Cape colonists placed on its communicative and connective properties are illustrated in an article from the *Cape Monthly Magazine*: 'First Impressions: Homeward Bound'. This anonymously penned article appeared in the July 1861 edition of the periodical, and from its opening lines, the 'ebb and flow' of the social system in the Cape is shown to be synchronised with tides that bring the English mail steamers to the colony, and propel them away again ('Homeward Bound', p.42).²²² The wave of excitement at the imminent arrival of the ship begins very gradually, first with general talk of the steamer, and later with anxious estimations as to the date of its arrival, speculation about the news that it carries, and bets on whether it contains letters from loved ones and tidings from good friends (p.43). The sense of anticipation and excitement builds until it peaks at the steamer's arrival, after which it subsides in a wave-like fashion as all of the newspapers are read and circulated, and the new topics for discussion exhausted. The arrival of the mail steamer thus prompts an initial 'wave' of synchronised social interaction amongst the inhabitants of Cape Town, and creates a culture of anticipation within the Colony.

Indeed, it is not long before the sense of anticipation and excitement in the colony begins to build again as the steamer prepares to leave for England. The Post Office becomes a hive of activity and water imagery abounds in the descriptions of Cape Town's inhabitants' activities, as they 'stream' and 'eddy' around the Post Office doors. All sectors of Capetonian society participate in the frenzy – clerks walk from their offices, and men and women stream from residences in town and from the rural areas towards the Post Office (p.43). As the time for the closure of the Post Office approaches, the bustle of people becomes more and more frenetic:

Outside the office it is all hurrying, red and breathless, towards the universal vortex; inside it is all tiptoe straining, still red and breathless, while a forest of hands and arms bearing aloft a dense

²²² I suspect that Alfred Cole is the author of this piece, as it is similar in style to the articles that he published under his name. The apparent reference to an earlier *Household Words* piece is also suggestive of Cole's authorship, as he contributed to the journal when he lived in England and was on friendly terms with its editor, Charles Dickens (Cole, *Reminiscences*, p.2).

foliage of letters and newspapers, bends forward as if before the blast of some fierce tornado [...] (p.44).

Nicholas Thomas and Richard Eves have noted the importance of letters to the colonial experience. They demonstrate that letters were ‘central to the reproduction of the colonist’s family ties’ because they allowed the maintenance of absent relationships and facilitated contact with the metropolitan world (Thomas and Eves, *Bad colonists*, p.4). Similarly, the metropolitan world was just as keen to maintain contact with the colonists, as the description above is strongly reminiscent of Charles Dickens’s and William Wills’s evocation of the Post Office on Valentine’s Day in *Household Words* in 1850. There, a London Post Office at closing time is also a watery maelstrom of papers:

The great window of that department being thrown open, the first black fringe of a thundercloud of newspapers impending over the Post Office was discharging itself fitfully – now in large drops, now in little; now in sudden plumps, now stopping altogether. By degrees it began to rain hard; by fast degrees the storm came on harder and harder, until it blew, rained, hailed, snowed, newspapers. A fountain of newspapers played in at the window. Water-spouts of newspapers broke from enormous sacks, and engulfed [sic] the men inside.²²³

The urgent desire to post items before the closing hour of the Post Office reduces both the London and the South African populations from people to violent and watery acts of nature.

The narrator of the ‘Homeward Bound’ article takes special notice of the women who use the oceanic postal system, describing the omnibuses that discharge ladies outside the Post Office carrying ‘letters of the most momentous importance, enclosed in delicately-tinted envelopes, and directed in the recognised cuneiform of feminine caligraphy’ [sic] (‘Homeward Bound’, pp.43-44). Letters written by a young woman living in the Cape near the time of the ‘Homeward Bound’ piece substantiate the emphasis that its writer places on feminine correspondence. Emma Rutherfoord wrote to her sister who was living in India in 1855, as follows:

Oh, what a dearth, and we have been 90, 100 days [since] our latest from England. I feel half miserable with despair poked up in this miserable little hole with scarcely a soul to speak to but our own circle. Peoples [sic] ideas do want widening and brushing up sometimes or else they are apt to get very narrow and dingy, even with the help of books one wants to draw forth ones [sic] living powers.²²⁴

⁴⁰ Charles Dickens and William Wills, ‘Valentine’s Day at the Post Office’, *Household Words*, 1, 30 March 1850, pp. 6 - 12 (p. 9).

²²⁴ Emma Rutherfoord, *In Mid-Victorian Cape Town: Letters from Miss Rutherfoord*, (Cape Town: A. A. Balkema, 1968), p. 86.

The immediacy and accessibility of letters over books perhaps explains Emma's preference to widen her ideas through them. Her frustration and misery at the delay in receiving them is self-evident. The delay that she complains about was due to a changeover in the Cape's ocean mail contract from the General Screw Steam Shipping Company to W.S. Lindsay and Co, owned by British MP, William Shaw Lindsay. However, the delays did not improve under Lindsay's management of the line, and in 1857, the contract was reassigned to the Union Steam Shipping Company.²²⁵ The inaugural journey of one of the Union's mail steamers in November 1857 testifies to the colonists' desire to communicate with the rest of the world, as the hold contained the largest volume of mail ever sent from the Cape – almost 11,000 letters and 3,700 newspapers (Goldblatt, p.138).²²⁶ The Cape colonists' excitement at the arrival of the mail steamer was thus in part due to their long wait for 'the latest from England' which was augmented by the unreliability of the ocean mail carriers.

The 'Homeward Bound' article's representation of the frenzy caused in the Cape Colony at the arrival and departure of a mail steamer is by no means an isolated account. Rather, it is a recurring motif, not only within the pages of the *Cape Monthly Magazine*, but also in the diaries and travel writings of visitors to the Cape. For instance, Cowper Rose, a lieutenant in the Royal Engineers who was based in the Cape for four years in the 1820's describes watching for mail steamers:

From the first announcement of an approaching vessel, by the appearance of a black ball on the signal hill, all is anxiety. "Is it English?" becomes the general inquiry. The next signal says, "English"; then, "Is it from England?" "Yes." Then, "Has it a mail?" and the signal tells us that it brings mail; and lastly, the date of its leaving the Downs; and the health-boat puts off and returns with the mail; and people meet each other with bustling, restless looks, and tell that there are five large boxes; and the post-office is thronged with anxious busy faces, and the files of newspapers, complete to a recent date, (that is, some three or four months old,) are sent to the library [...].²²⁷

Anxious waiting for the mail steamer was thus a well-established tradition within the Cape Colony by the time that the 'Homeward Bound' piece was published. Indeed, the *Cape Monthly Magazine* is full of references to imperial communicative networks and the mail steamers in particular. Writing with

²²⁴ Robert Goldblatt, *Postmarks of the Cape of Good Hope: The Postal History and Markings of the Cape of Good Hope and Griqualand West 1792-1910*, (Cape Town: Reijger Publishers, 1984), p. 138; C. J. Harris and B. D. Ingpen, *Mailships of the Union-Castle Line*, (Sparkford: Patrick Stephens, 1994), pp. 12 - 15.

²²⁶ This desire to participate in international communication networks was not limited to the Cape Colony. See for example Mark Ravinder Frost's examination of the popularity of the colonial postal system in Asia. (Mark Ravinder Frost, 'Asia's Maritime Networks and the Colonial Public Sphere, 1840-1920', *New Zealand Journal of Asian Studies*, 6. 2 (2004), pp. 63 - 94.)

²²⁷ Cowper Rose, *Four Years in Southern Africa*, (London: Henry Colburn and Richard Bentley, 1829), p. 6.

relief at the re-establishment of the ocean mail contract in 1857 after a year of intermittent service,

Roderick Noble notes:

How refreshingly pleasant it is to receive, with continued regularity, the typographical treasures which are, month after month, issued from the English press! Those who remember the weary intervals which, in days not long passed away, used to intervene between the arrival of such treasures will more thoroughly appreciate our present advantages [...] a few weeks after their publication, the new books and periodicals crowd the tables of the Public Library [...].²²⁸

What unites all of these descriptions of the mail steamers is the sense of expectation and excitement at fresh news and new 'treasures' for the Library.

The bustle and frenetic energy surrounding the arrival of the mail steamers was also symptomatic of the Cape's perceived isolation from the rest of the British Empire. Chapter One has explored how the South African Public Library was viewed as an intellectual conduit to the metropole. Both Lord Somerset, the founder of the fund for establishing the Library, and William Porter, the first speaker at the inaugural meeting of the subscribers to the Library, emphasised the importance of the Library as a bridge between the remote and isolated colony and England. In Porter's address, the Library was situated in a 'little capital of a thinly populated Colony at the furthest part of Africa!' (Porter, 'Address', p.4) The Cape's distance from London suggests that, in its contrast to the metropole, the imagined space of the Cape can be viewed as a form of imperial province.²²⁹ If that is so, then the mail steamers which connect the Cape to London function at a similar level to the mail and stage coaches which connected London to the English provinces. Ruth Livesey has recently argued that the mail coach in Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre* functions as a 'communicative vehicle that knits the smallest, most remote places and persons into the nation while preserving place, origin, and distinct identity' (Livesey, p.618). However distant a village may be from the metropolis, the coach enabled its inhabitants to communicate with the city, without compromising their own unique regional identity (p.632). In a similar way, this fictional model can be applied to the real mail steamers which connected the Cape, one of the most remote colonies in the British Empire, to London. Despite being part of a communication network that functioned on a

²²⁸ Roderick Noble, 'Literary Review', *Cape Monthly Magazine*, October 1858, pp. 246 - 251 (p. 246).

²²⁹ Ian Duncan, 'The Provincial or Regional Novel', in *A Companion to the Victorian Novel*, ed. by Patrick Brantlinger and William B. Thesing, (Oxford: Blackwell, 2002), pp. 318 - 335 (p. 322).

much larger scale than the mail coaches, the mail steamers kept the Cape colonists abreast of developments in the metropole whilst also preserving the Cape's nascent literary culture.

Colonial rhythms of periodicity

The cyclical social rhythms that the arrival and departure of the mail steamers imposed onto the temporal organisation of the Cape Colony are similar to the rhythms of periodicity that Mark Turner describes in his work on nineteenth-century British periodical culture.²³⁰ Following E.P. Thompson, Turner argues that in an increasingly secular, mechanised nineteenth century, religious temporal markers began to give way to industrial ones.²³¹ Turner pays particular attention to 'Magazine Day' – the penultimate day of the month when the printers and publishers of monthly periodicals sent them from Paternoster Row to their wholesale and retail customers for dispatch across London, England, and the empire as a whole.²³² A contemporary account of Magazine Day by Charles Manby Smith describes the monthly hive of activity around the usually tranquil Paternoster Row – it becomes 'as much alive as an Egyptian pot of vipers'. The employees of the magazine trade are represented in similar terms to the Cape colonists at the Post Office, flowing along the road and into individual shops like a human 'tide'.²³³ The descriptions of the South African and London post offices also seem replicated in Smith's description of the bustle of Paternoster Row's printers, publishers, packers and couriers:

[...] the shops are crammed with messengers, bag-laden and clamorous, from all parts of London; and without, the Row is thronged like a market with figures darting to and fro, and across and back again – with bulging sacks on shoulder – with paper parcels and glittering volumes grasped under each arm – and with piles of new books a yard high, resting on clasped hands, and steadied beneath the chin. (Smith, p.44)

²³⁰ For more on the influence that the rhythms of newspaper printing had on English society and culture, see Matthew Rubery, *The Novelty of Newspapers: Victorian Fiction after the Invention of the News*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009).

²³¹ Mark W. Turner, 'Periodical Time in the Nineteenth Century', *Media History*, 8. 2 (2002), pp. 183 - 196 (p. 184); Edward Palmer Thompson, 'Time, Work-Discipline, and Industrial Capitalism', *Past and Present*, 38. (Dec 1967), pp. 56 - 97.

²³² Laurel Brake, *Print in Transition, 1850-1910: Studies in Media and Book History*, (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2001), p. 390.

²³³ Charles Manby Smith, *The Little World of London, or, Pictures in Little of London Life*, (London: Arthur Hall, Virtue and Co., 1857), p. 41.

The precious 'glittering volumes' are then dispatched across London and to the country booksellers via the carts and mail coaches that choke the Row in a unidirectional flow of traffic from Ludgate Hill down to Cheapside (p.47). The mail coaches which deliver the eagerly anticipated 'monthly literary treat' to provincial readers thus function similarly to the transoceanic mail steamers, bringing the same typographic treasures to similarly expectant readers, albeit without spending a month at sea in transit (p.47).

Indeed, the temporal organisation that Magazine Day imposed upon London can be transposed into the Cape Colony, with the monthly arrival of the mail steamers standing in for the London couriers, bringing the most recent literary publications from London to the colonists. This shared and simultaneous experience within a community is what sociologists of time call 'temporal symmetry', and is, they argue, 'one of the fundamental principles of social organisation' (Zerubavel, p.64-65). The experience that the Cape colonists shared at the arrival and departure of the mail steamers, and the synchronised readership of the books and magazines delivered by these ships could thus be seen as acting as a form of social bonding. The monthly publication of the *Cape Monthly Magazine* would thus arguably have added a second layer of social cohesiveness within the 'imagined community' of the colony, due to the shared readership of the *Magazine*. The Cape colonists were thus party to both intra- and extra-colonial bonding – they were linked to London via the literature delivered by the mail steamers, and linked to each other through their shared readership of both local and metropolitan literature.

Whilst the 'Homeward Bound' article illustrates the pervasive influence that British cultural and literary practices had on the Cape Colony, it is revealing to consider the moments of disjunction within the article. For instance, once the Post Office in Cape Town has closed, the narrative moves from the town centre to the harbour, and describes groups of young men who charter rowing boats in order to accompany the mail steamer as it makes its departure ('Homeward Bound', p.45). The narrator follows one such group, which briefly boards the steamer in order to describe the passengers who have just embarked. The passengers are an assorted group which includes well-travelled merchants, young tourists, and gentlemen of business. The anxiousness of an elderly couple returning to England after thirty years in Cape Town is demonstrated by their 'trepidation' about the 'new

world into which they are venturing' and the 'entirely new system of things there since they came out [...] to the Cape (p.46). The Old World has become a new one to the elderly couple, and this inversion of old world and new not only emphasises the provinciality of the Cape Colony, it also casts doubts in the reader's mind as to the mail steamers' success in keeping the Cape's inhabitants abreast of developments in England. Despite the relative robustness of the fledgling print culture in the Cape Colony, England, for the narrator, as well as the other passengers on the steamer, remains 'ever HOME!' (p.49).

This failure to keep the Cape's colonists up to date with England's social and technological progress suggests the influence of temporal asymmetry – a sense of confusion which arises due to the 'competing, overlapping cycles of time that confront the reader in the different periodical cycles in the nineteenth century' (Turner, 'Periodical Time', p.188). The mail steamers' unpredictable journey times, and the lack of forewarning about the contents of the ships' holds would have contributed to a sense of confusion and instability within the Cape, as evidenced by the 'anxious faces' in Cowper Rose's description earlier. Competition for the scarce resources of fresh newspapers, journals and books in the South African Public Library lead to complaints about the 'tattered' state of the material after countless readers had perused their pages (Noble, 'Literary Review', November 1857, p.340). At times, restrictions had to be imposed on readers in the Reading Room – they were allowed just 15 minutes each to acquaint themselves with the latest delivery of British newspapers.²³⁴ The act of reading itself could also become alienating as colonial readers entered into asynchronous timescapes, both within the narrative of the novel where imaginary time becomes flexible and non-linear, and in the context of their awareness of the time lag which affected their access to metropolitan literary material.²³⁵ Reading imported books highlighted both the colonists' disconnection as much as their participation in metropolitan culture. Added to this milieu were the overlapping monthly cycles of the *Cape Monthly Magazine* and the daily and weekly cycles of the local newspapers. What then presents

²³⁴ William Henry Patrick Aloysius Tyrrell-Glynn, 'The History of the South African Public Library, Cape Town, 1830-1961', (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Stellenbosch, 1983), p. 13.

²³⁵ For more on time and the novel format, see M. M. Bakhtin, 'Forms of Time and of the Chronotope in the Novel: Notes toward a Historical Poetics', in *The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays*, ed. by Michael Holquist, (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1981), pp. 84 - 258.

itself is a ‘cacophony’ of different cycles of time, dictated by the different types of media that the Cape colonists were exposed to (Turner, ‘Periodical Time’, p.186). Rather than being mere catalysts for social cohesion within the Cape Colony, the overlapping cycles of the mail steamers and the local press reveal the sense of non-cohesive competition and urgency which underlay the culture of anticipation in the Cape. The ships and the local press thus performed two competing functions, simultaneously creating a sense of shared experience and consciousness amongst the colonists whilst also setting them up in competition with each other.

Ephemerality, competition and demise

In January 1862, Roderick Noble welcomed the New Year in his ‘Literature Review’ by considering the *Cape Monthly Magazine*’s success at being a ‘medium for reflecting the progress’ of the Cape Colony’s intellectual and political development. He claimed that this was due to the magazine’s placement within the literary market in the Cape as a space in which to discuss and reflect on the news reported in the more ‘ephemeral’ local newspapers. Noble also expressed a desire to shape not only the present, but also future generations of the Cape through the discussions and debates contained within the *Cape Monthly Magazine* (p.53). Noble’s editorial here is poignant, as six months later the journal ceased production due to financial pressures.²³⁶ The periodical market in the Cape was being squeezed by the ‘large and increasing demand’ for British periodical magazines.²³⁷ Indeed, as Brian Cheadle notes, the improvements in steam communication between the Cape and England meant that by the late nineteenth century, ‘serious readers could readily sustain themselves on imported periodicals without any sense of being much behind the times’ (Cheadle, p.296). The Cape’s geographic distance from London was gradually being eroded by the increasingly fast travelling times of the mail steamers. A journey that had taken up to three months in the 1820’s was shortened to 42 days in 1857, and 35 by 1865, and further impetus was added to make the journey even faster when

²³⁶ It would be revived under the editorship of Roderick Noble, and, after his death, by his brother, John Noble, for a second series between 1870 and 1881 (Cheadle, p.266)

²³⁷ Alfred Whaley Cole and Roderick Noble, ‘Notice to Subscribers’, *Cape Monthly Magazine*, June 1862, p. 392.

the Cape's Legislative Assembly voted to pay the Union Steam Shipping Company £250 for each day that they shaved off the voyage time in 1859 (Goldblatt p.138 – 140; Harris and Ingpen p.16). Indeed, much like the races between the mail coaches that Walter Scott described in the opening passages of *The Heart of Midlothian*, the mail steamers of the Union Line also engaged in competitions with private mail steamers to see who could get to the Cape first (Goldblatt, p.140).²³⁸ The improved communication networks between London and its imperial colonies allowed for faster dissemination of British reading material, and these imported textual commodities undermined the market for locally produced literature and periodicals.

Despite this rather gloomy foreshadowing of the demise of the *Cape Monthly Magazine*, it is important to recognise not only its ambitious aims, but also its success as the only colonial literary periodical to establish a long-term run. Although it would succumb to competition from its metropolitan rivals later in the century, the *Cape Monthly Magazine* provided an important space for the articulation of a growing sense of colonial self-confidence by acting as a 'clearing house for new ideas' (Dubow, *Commonwealth*, p.77). These new ideas included the expansion of the Cape's cultural institutions through the founding of the Art Gallery, and support for opening the first University in the Cape in the 1870's.²³⁹ The *Cape Monthly Magazine* also participated in local political debates, such as the Cape's campaign for self-government in the 1860's. In the same editorial of 1862 that I mentioned above, Noble positioned the *Cape Monthly Magazine* on a par with representative government as an indicator of the increasing maturity of the Colony:

It was once erroneously remarked within our hearing that three institutions existed in the Cape for which the community was not ripe, viz., the abolition of slavery, representative government, and the *Cape Monthly Magazine* [...] ('Literary Review', Jan 1862, p.53).

In addition to providing a valuable space for such exploratory and 'elaborate discussions', the *Cape Monthly Magazine's* miscellaneous structure also encouraged the development of a local intelligentsia

²³⁸ Walter Scott, *The Heart of Midlothian* (London: Marcus Ward and Co, [1818] 1878), p. 13.

²³⁹ For instance, in an article on a fine arts exhibition in the Cape in July 1858, the writer champions a colonial appreciation for art, and the need for an Art Gallery in which to exhibit local art and sculpture. ('Fine Arts Exhibition', *Cape Monthly Magazine*, July 1858, p. 63.) The *Cape Monthly Magazine* also ran regular reports on acquisitions at the South African Museum, and reported (often verbatim) the addresses made to the subscribers of the Public Library at their annual meeting. The periodical's support for the founding of the Cape of Good Hope University can be seen in a number of articles featured between June 1873 and February 1874.

made up of regular contributors, many of whom would become well-known public figures ('Literary Review', Jan 1862, p.53).²⁴⁰ The Cape in the mid-nineteenth century was thus far more than the diminutive, 'thinly populated Colony at the furthest part of Africa' that William Porter had envisaged in the 1840's. Rather, it was an ambitious and intellectually driven community that expressed both its local and transoceanic interests through the medium of the *Cape Monthly Magazine*. By giving the colonists a space in which to articulate their shared experiences and by encouraging the development of the Cape's intellectual structures, the editors of the *Cape Monthly Magazine* fulfilled their aim 'to refine and elevate the every-day life of colonial readers by placing before them pictures of occurrences with which they are familiar' (Noble, 'Literary Review' January 1862, p.53). In doing so, they fostered a sense of intellectual community and cohesion within the Cape Colony, structured within familiar British frameworks of literary and intellectual practice.

This interplay between colonial and metropolitan print cultures within the Cape Colony is highlighted through the *Cape Monthly Magazine's* literary heritage as well as its contents, in articles like 'First Impressions: Homeward Bound'. London-based temporal markers such as Magazine Day were transplanted to the Cape Colony through the cyclical arrival and departure of the mail steamers, which not only brought English literature and news to the Colony, but also shaped the social rhythms and reinforced the social cohesion of its inhabitants. Brief moments of disjunction within the 'Homeward Bound' text reveal the tension between the Cape colonists' urge to emulate established British literary practices and their desire to innovate their own, distinct ones. The increasingly regular arrival of the mail steamers, containing rival metropolitan periodicals added to this tension, and would eventually lead to the *Cape Monthly Magazine's* demise in 1881. Nevertheless, despite its growing weakness in the face of metropolitan competition, the *Cape Monthly Magazine* should still be

²⁴⁰ These well-known figures included Cole and Noble themselves. Cole became a judge of the Supreme Court of the Cape Colony, whilst Noble became a Professor of Physical Science and English at the South African College, and was later on the council of the University of the Cape of Good Hope. (Cole, *Reminiscences*, p.101; Hattersley, 'Cole', pp.136 – 137 and Immelman, 'Noble', pp.518 – 519). Other contributors included the ethnologist William Bleek; historian G. M. Theal; the superintendent-general of education for Cape Colony, Langham Dale; explorer Thomas Baines; and the astronomer, Thomas Maclear amongst many others (Dubow, *Commonwealth*, p.77, Rob Siebörger, 'Dale, Sir Langham (1826–1898)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2006, <<http://0-www.oxforddnb.com.catalogue.ulrls.lon.ac.uk/view/article/61105>> [accessed 16 October 2014]. Thomas Maclear, 'Astronomical Notices', *Cape Monthly Magazine*, February 1857, pp. 129 - 130.).

recognised as an important part of nineteenth-century colonial dialogue. As a stimulus for debate and a space for the vocalisation of a growing sense of colonial identity, the *Cape Monthly Magazine* played an important role as a voice of the Cape's burgeoning intelligentsia. As Paul Eggert suggests in his analysis of the colonial literary market in Australia, local expressions of thought and opinion were 'officially validated by a respectable print culture'.²⁴¹ Thinking of the Cape as a remote province within the British Empire therefore allows modern readers to appreciate the benefits of the ocean mail system. Whilst it fostered ever closer links to England, the time lags and delays associated with the mail steamers in the mid-nineteenth century also allowed this small, remote Colony to develop its own distinct identity, and preserve its own unique literary and intellectual culture.

Indeed, the *Cape Monthly Magazine*'s editors' recognition of the importance of local literature and knowledge can be seen in the second series of the publication (1870 -1881). The *Cape Monthly Magazine* was resumed in July 1870 under Roderick Noble's sole editorship of. In his 'Introduction' to the new series, Noble addressed the cause of the demise of the first series of the *Magazine*, writing:

[...] the CAPE MONTHLY MAGAZINE will not attempt the impossible task of competing with or imitating the English periodicals which are so largely read in this as in other Colonies [...].

Rather, the competition from imported magazines encouraged Noble to make the second series of the *Cape Monthly Magazine* even more distinctly 'local' than it had been in the past. Noble's aims for the reincarnated periodical demonstrate this:

The main object the Editor sets before himself is to render the *Magazine* one of special Colonial interest, and that, in a certain sense of the term, it should be racy of the soil. Throughout South Africa there are historical facts to be collected, reminiscences to be recorded, legends, traditions, both of the Natives and European Settlers, to be gleaned and preserved for the use of the future historian, as well as for the gratification of the present reader (Noble, 'Introduction', July 1870, p.1).

Noble goes on to state his interest in publishing local literature and scientific discoveries as well as engaging in discussions which he hoped would bring about the 'further advancement and improvement' of the Colony's agricultural and commercial sectors. The *Cape Monthly Magazine*'s outlook was thus broader than it had been in the past, as Noble speaks of South Africa as a whole, rather than simply focussing on the Cape. In this extract Noble also situates the *Cape Monthly Magazine*

²⁴¹ Paul Eggert, 'Robbery under Arms: The Colonial Market, Imperial Publishers, and the Demise of the Three-Decker Novel', *Book History*, 6. (2003), pp. 127 - 146 (p. 129).

as a repository of South African cultural, historical and scientific writings, transforming a monthly periodical into an archive of local knowledge – a ‘permanent record [...] of [...] research and inquiry’ (‘Introduction’, July 1870, p.1). Rather than merely transplanting British literary norms and processes to the Cape, Roderick Noble adapted his publication to suit the local market and expand its readership.

The desire to become a permanent record of the Cape’s intellectual development was realised. A retrospective survey of the second series of the *Cape Monthly Magazine* demonstrates that it published a number of notable travel accounts and historical pieces.²⁴² Saul Dubow has also revealed the innovative research that the *Cape Monthly Magazine* published in the fields of botanical science, evolution, geology, ethnography and human development (pp.94 – 110). I have found the work of the linguist and philologist Wilhelm Bleek particularly interesting because his records of the |Xam (or Cape San) people’s language and folk lore have preserved their now-extinct culture, and are providing a rich resource for present-day researchers.²⁴³ Some of Bleek’s studies were printed in the *Cape Monthly Magazine* between 1857 and 1873, and he also published books, his most well-known being *A Comparative Grammar of South African Languages* (1862).²⁴⁴ Bleek demonstrates the racial prejudices of his time, positioning the San people on the lowest rung of humanity with regard to ‘civilisation’, describing their language as ‘uncouth’, and characterising their intellectual abilities as ‘low’.²⁴⁵ The *Cape Monthly Magazine*’s project to create local forms of colonial knowledge resulted in the

²⁴² *Selected Articles from the Cape Monthly Magazine (New Series 1870 - 1876)*, ed. by A. M. Lewin Robinson, (Cape Town: Van Riebeeck Society, 1978).

²⁴³ For example, curators at the Origins Centre Museum at the University of the Witwatersrand have a small display on Wilhelm Bleek and Lucy Lloyd’s work. Bleek’s and Lloyd’s notebooks have recently also been the subject of a digitisation project at the University of Cape Town, which has produced an accompanying publication by Pippa Skotnes. (‘The Digital Bleek and Lloyd’, <<http://lloydbleekcollection.cs.uct.ac.za/index.html>> [accessed 3 November 2015]; Pippa Skotnes, *Claim to the Country: The Archive of Lucy Lloyd and Wilhelm Bleek*, (Johannesburg: Jacana, 2007).

²⁴⁴ Wilhelm Heinrich Immanuel Bleek, *A Comparative Grammar of South African Languages*, (London: Trübner and Co, 1862). See also, Wilhelm Heinrich Immanuel Bleek, ‘Researches into the Relations between the Hottentots and Kafirs, Part 1’, *Cape Monthly Magazine*, April 1857, pp. 199 - 208; Wilhelm Heinrich Immanuel Bleek, ‘Researches into the Relations between the Hottentots and Kafirs, Part 2’, *Cape Monthly Magazine*, May 1857, pp. 289 - 296; Wilhelm Heinrich Immanuel Bleek, ‘African Folk Lore’, *Cape Monthly Magazine*, September 1870, pp. 168 - 182.

²⁴⁵ Wilhelm Heinrich Immanuel Bleek, ‘Scientific Reasons for the Study of the Bushman Language’, *Cape Monthly Magazine*, September 1873, pp. 149 - 153 (p. 150).

objectification of the area's indigenous people, and displays the covert violence of colonial knowledge in the way that people were disempowered and selected to be the objects for study.

The reinvigorated *Cape Monthly Magazine* survived from 1870 into the early 1880's before being repackaged as the *Cape Quarterly Review* from 1881 to 1883 (Robinson, 'Introduction' to *Selected Articles*, p.2). Dubow notes that by this point, the *Cape Monthly Magazine*'s broad, 'generalist' remit of publishing and discussing literature and scientific research in the same publication was no longer effective, and it was clear that each discipline should its own space within colonial knowledge structures. As a result, John Noble, Roderick Noble's brother, who had taken over the Editorship of the *Cape Monthly* after his death in December 1875, participated in the founding of the South African Fine Arts Institution in 1871 and the South African Philosophical Society in 1877 (Dubow, *Commonwealth*, p.119). Thus even though the *Magazine* finally ceased publication in the 1880's, its aims to encourage and develop the Colony's nascent intellectualism came to fruition and lived on in these cultural and scientific institutions which are still in existence today.

Looking back over the life span of the *Cape Monthly Magazine* it is clear how influential British print culture was upon its production. The previous literary experience of the *Magazine*'s editors meant that the *Cape Monthly Magazine* retained the format and structure inherited from its British predecessors. However, competition from imported British magazines and periodicals prompted the editors of the magazine to reimagine the remit of the *Cape Monthly Magazine*, turning it into an explicitly local publication. In addition to being a vehicle for entertainment and education, it also became an archive which preserved the unique research and study taking place in the Cape at the time. The fact that this research is still being discussed by historians and literary scholars today is testament to the *Cape Monthly Magazine*'s success at reinterpreting and restructuring its role in the colony. As a result of this specialisation, the *Cape Monthly Magazine* continued publication for another thirteen years, and even when it finally ceased production it survived in the cultural and institutional structures that it had helped to found.

The Colony looks to the metropole – reviews of Trollope and Eliot

Whilst the *Cape Monthly Magazine* was committed to encouraging the development of local literature, I have also demonstrated that it never lost interest in the literary productions of the ‘mother country’ (Noble, ‘Literary Review’, Jan 1862, p.52). This section explores the impact of George Eliot’s and Anthony Trollope’s writings on the literary community in the Cape through an analysis of the reviews of their literature in the *Cape Monthly Magazine*. In Chapter One I touched briefly on why I feel that Nancy Henry’s claim that Eliot’s books ‘provided South African colonists with a nostalgic vision of England’ is a limited conceptualisation of Eliot’s influence upon the colonists in the Cape (Henry, *Empire*, p.2). I argued that in the context of the history of the South African Public Library, Eliot’s books were used to elevate the status of novels and fiction, and to frame a conversation about how to encourage the development of a literary culture, unique to the South African context. The present chapter will build on this argument by exploring how literary critics writing for the *Cape Monthly Magazine* interpreted Eliot’s works. These reviews demonstrate that whilst Eliot’s books may have been read for their sentimental evocations of England, the reviewers were more interested in Eliot’s skill as an author and her insights into human nature. In these reviews, an abstraction takes place, as the concerns of Eliot’s novels are withdrawn from their English settings, and the reviewers focus on her writerly techniques and moral values. Admittedly, this focus on Eliot’s expertise over the emotional connection stimulated by her subject matter is a result of the critical focus of the reviewers. However, it nevertheless challenges Henry’s assertion that all colonists responded to Eliot’s works in a similarly emotive and sentimental fashion.

Whilst Eliot’s reviewers focussed on her skills of writing and observation, the review of Anthony Trollope’s *South Africa* in the *Cape Monthly Magazine* concentrated on the content of his book. The second part of this section explores how the colonists responded to viewing themselves through Anthony Trollope’s metropolitan gaze. The *Cape Monthly Magazine* was concerned with how the colony was represented to outsiders, and rightly so, considering the timing of Trollope’s visit. By going to South Africa shortly after the British had annexed the Transvaal in 1877, Trollope ensured that he would have interested readers at home waiting to hear about the latest developments in the

colony (Trollope, *South Africa*, I, p.1 – 2). The Cape colonists were therefore particularly concerned about Trollope's inaccuracies, both in fact and in interpretation. Their fragile sense of colonial nationhood was challenged by Trollope's claim that South Africa was not particularly useful to the imperial project, and the review demonstrates their self-consciousness in this regard.

Regular 'Literary Review' columns authored by Roderick Noble appeared in the first series of the *Cape Monthly Magazine* and surveyed newly imported books, as well as locally produced works of literature. The reviews encompassed fiction, poetry and nonfiction, with a particular interest in science, history, biography, and travel narratives, especially those set in Africa. Noble also remarked on the contents of the overseas periodicals, seeming to favour the *North British Review*, the *Quarterly Review*, the *Edinburgh Review*, *Blackwood's Edinburgh Review*, *Household Words* (in which his co-editor Alfred Cole had published articles about the Cape earlier in the century), the *Westminster Review*, and *Fraser's Magazine*.²⁴⁶ Noble reviewed local literature and imported works concurrently in the same articles, effectively placing them on a par with each other in terms of literary value. The literary review columns in the second series of the *Cape Monthly Magazine* became a lot more sporadic and were replaced by stand-alone articles written about individual works or authors. This was presumably a result of Noble's joint commitments as the sole editor of the *Cape Monthly Magazine* and Professor of Physical Science and English at the South African College.²⁴⁷ The reviews do not appear to have been written by Noble, and were usually printed under pseudonyms or initials. The authors that were reviewed were international, and included Edgar Allan Poe, Joost van Vondel, and the two authors that are the subject of this thesis, George Eliot and Anthony Trollope, amongst others.²⁴⁸

I have already established that it is difficult to speculate about the circulation of Eliot's novels in the Cape Colony, but they were certainly accessible to readers in the South African Public Library, and the reviews in the *Cape Monthly Magazine* suggest that they were being circulated amongst the community. The *Cape Monthly Magazine* published three reviews of George Eliot's work. The first,

²⁴⁶ Cole's 'Cape Sketches' appeared as four articles in *Household Words* between September and November 1850.

²⁴⁷ 'In Memoriam: Roderick Noble', *Cape Monthly Magazine*, January 1876, pp. 55 - 64.

²⁴⁸ R., 'Joost Van Vondel', *Cape Monthly Magazine*, January 1871, pp. 20 - 24; R2., 'Edgar Allan Poe', *Cape Monthly Magazine*, May 1871, pp. 259-264; H.S.C., 'George Eliot', *Cape Monthly Magazine*, August 1873, pp. 65 - 73; H.S.C., 'George Eliot: As a Poet', *Cape Monthly Magazine*, September 1873, pp. 161 - 169; S.R.N., 'Trollope's *South Africa*', *Cape Monthly Magazine*, June 1878, pp. 362 - 374.

published in July 1861, was a review by Roderick Noble of *Silas Marner*.²⁴⁹ The review is a short paragraph sandwiched between brief comments about William Makepeace Thackeray's *Adventures of Philip*, and a travelogue called *Roman Candles*, written by Percy Hetherington Fitzgerald. Noble is enthusiastic about *Silas Marner*. He calls Eliot a genius because of her 'absolutely faultless' plot line, her 'natural' characterisation and her 'power [...] of presenting to us views of life among working men and women exactly as life really is'. These attributes make *Silas Marner* 'very much more charming than "Adam Bede"', and superior to *The Mill on the Floss*, some portions of which Noble found 'repulsive' (p.61). These very brief references to Eliot's other novels are provided without any contextual information, suggesting that Noble assumed that his readers were familiar with Eliot's oeuvre. They also reinforce his credibility as a well-read and discerning reviewer.

Unfortunately Noble does not clarify what he found so offensive about *The Mill on the Floss*. However, his use of the adjective 'repulsive' is striking, as it echoes Eneas Sweetland Dallas's review of *The Mill on the Floss* in *The Times* in 1860:

It is difficult to describe adults leading a purely bestial life of *vulgar* respectability without rendering the picture simply repulsive. But the life of children is essentially an animal life [...] "George Eliot" relieves the repulsiveness of the insect life which she has exhibited in the Dodson family by making her bigger insects all revolve around these two little creatures, Maggie and Tom Tulliver [...].²⁵⁰

Dallas's review focusses on Eliot's power of characterisation, and he complains that Eliot has created 'unpleasant companions – prosaic, selfish, nasty' (p.8). The Dodson family in particular raise his ire, and he repeatedly describes them as 'odious', 'degraded' and 'prosaic' (pp.9 – 11). According to Dallas, their narrow respectability has made them 'mean', and as a result 'everybody in this tale is repelling everybody' (p.10). Dallas's focus on the Dodson family's lack of good moral character again implies the role that literature can play in fostering the development of ethical qualities amongst readers:

The object which the author has set herself of painting in all its nakedness, hideousness, and littleness the life of respectable brutishness which so many persons lead, illuminated by not one ray of spiritual influence, by no suspicion of a higher life, of another world, of a surrounding divinity, – lifts the present work out of the category of ordinary novels. The author is attempting not merely to amuse us, as a novelist, but, as a preacher, to make us think and feel (p.11).

²⁴⁹ Roderick Noble, 'Literary Review', *Cape Monthly Magazine*, July 1861, pp. 58 - 63 (p. 61).

²⁵⁰ Eneas Sweetland Dallas, "The Mill on the Floss", *The Times*, 19 May 1860, p.10-11 reprinted in *A Century of George Eliot Criticism*, ed. by Gordon Sherman Haight, (London: Methuen, 1966), p. 12.

The characters who encourage readers to empathise with them are Maggie and Tom, who Eliot has created with ‘the most amusing fidelity’ to the realities of childhood (p.12). By evoking Dallas’s review, it is possible that Noble is creating a shorthand encryption of Dallas’s criticisms into his own, shorter, review of *Silas Marner*. It is also probable that Noble repeated a metropolitan reviewer’s criticisms to validate and lend further credibility to his own critique of a genius’s work. This first review of George Eliot’s work, albeit brief, demonstrates that her books were being circulated in the Cape Colony, and that they were being appreciated for her ‘particular power’ of observation, rather than for their sentimental visions of England.

The later reviews of George Eliot’s works were published in the second series of the *Cape Monthly Magazine*, in August and September 1873. These reviews were not written by Noble, but rather by one H.S.C.²⁵¹ The August article is the lead article of the issue and is a review of Eliot’s novels. The review conforms to what Leah Price identifies as a nineteenth-century tendency of characterising Eliot’s work as ‘peculiarly quotable’ (Price, p.145). At the opening of the review, H.S.C. praises Eliot’s ability of ‘concentrating the floating truths of humanity in sharp, pregnant sentences’ (H.S.C., ‘George Eliot’, p.66). In doing so, H.S.C. echoes Alexander Main’s introduction to his anthology of *Wise, Witty and Tender Sayings* (1873) in which he places Eliot foremost amongst her literary peers because of the ‘grand central truths’ which can be found in the pages of her writings.²⁵² Like an anthology, H.S.C. makes extensive use of quotations, which he calls ‘caskets of truth’, from Eliot’s works to demonstrate her skill as an author and her insights into human nature (H.S.C., ‘George Eliot’, p.66). The reviewer then laments the glut of ‘common-place novels’ available at the time, and cites George Eliot as a novelist who stands apart from this plethora of inferior authors. This assertion is backed up by comparing Eliot to other ‘great’ names – Shakespeare, Chaucer and Walter Scott – all of whom have the talent and ability necessary to represent people ‘both as they are

²⁵¹ I have been unable to find any biographical information about an individual with these initials in the Cape in the 1870’s. For ease of expression, I will assume that H.S.C. is male. However, it is possible that H.S.C. was female, since, as I shall demonstrate later in this chapter, contributions by female authors had a significant impact on the *Cape Monthly Magazine*.

²⁵² Alexander Main, ‘Preface’, in *Wise, Witty, and Tender Sayings in Prose and Verse: Selected from the Works of George Eliot by Alexander Main*, ed. by Alexander Main, (Edinburgh: W. Blackwood and Sons, 1872), pp. x - xi.

and as they should be' (p.65 - 66). Eliot is therefore held up as the 'greatest literary artist of our age' because of the 'wealth of instruction and amusement' that her novels offer (p.73).

Having established Eliot's credentials and affirmed her place within the English literary cannon, the reviewer then picks out details from her novels in order to give examples of her elevated writing style. *Romola's* Tito Melema is held up as an example of Eliot's 'clear mental conception' of her plot because of the way that his weakness of character is foreshadowed in her first descriptions of him (H.S.C, 'George Eliot', p.68). There is a curious error in this section, as Tito is referred to as 'Filo' throughout (pp.68 - 69). The cause of this is unclear, but the fact that it hasn't been corrected by the magazine's editor suggests that *Romola* was not particularly well-known amongst the Cape colonists. The review moves on from *Romola* to *Adam Bede*, which is called Eliot's 'greatest work', again because of her power of characterisation and her insights into the weaknesses of human nature (p.69). *The Mill on the Floss* is also commended for the characterisation of Maggie Tulliver, whose death moved the reviewer to a 'great sob of anguish, and [...] a sympathetic tear' (p.72). For H.S.C., the emphasis throughout is on Eliot's insightful characterisations, her ability to create an emotional connection between her readers and characters, and her skill in planning and executing her plotlines.

H.S.C. identifies Eliot's powers of observation and writing style as important aspects of her ability to create such memorable characters. Eliot is held up as a novelist of the 'future' because of her innovative use of the 'scientific study of human nature' in order to construct the characters and the plots of her novels (H.S.C, 'George Eliot', p.67). In H.S.C.'s opinion, Eliot's experimental approach and her deployment of the laws of causation are the most important aspects of her work. This anticipates Eliot's own description of her works in a letter to John Blackwood in 1876 as "simply a set of experiments in life" (*Eliot Letters*, VI, p.216-217). Eliot also alludes to her experimental approach in the 'Prelude' to *Middlemarch*:

Who that cares much to know the history of man, and how the mysterious mixture behaves under the varying circumstances of Time, has not dealt, at least briefly, on the life of Saint Theresa [...]
(Eliot, *Middlemarch*, I, p. v).

The first line of the novel establishes Eliot's 'dynamic methodology of experimental biology', but curiously, this would not have been known by H.S.C., as he admits to not having read *Middlemarch* (H.S.C., p.69).²⁵³ That a reviewer of George Eliot's novels had not read her latest novel, which had been serialised over a year previously, is unfortunate, as it damages H.S.C.'s credibility.²⁵⁴ This is further undermined by his review's lack of criticism. Whilst he acknowledges that Eliot idealises some of her characters, H.S.C. defends her by arguing that Shakespeare could be accused of the same, and that their idealisation is akin to poetry because both authors strive to do more than merely entertain, they tell great human truths (p.72). The only other criticism that H.S.C. considers is that *The Mill on the Floss* is awkwardly constructed because the two plot lines do not merge into each other fluidly. However, this criticism is brushed aside as not amounting to much, and H.S.C. dismisses those who cannot appreciate Eliot's genius as being 'encased in an armour of impervious dullness or depravity' (p.72). The message that readers of the August issue of the *Cape Monthly Magazine* were to take home was that George Eliot's skill as an author, observer and philosopher raised her works to an unimpeachably elevated intellectual and moral level.

H.S.C.'s second review, this time of Eliot's poetry, was published in September 1873. In this review, H.S.C. makes his interest in science, which had been latent in the previous review, more explicit. The review opens with H.S.C. musing how the nineteenth century is an age of science. Citing Charles Darwin, Alexander Bain and Herbert Spencer as the most significant thinkers and writers of the era, H.S.C. places George Eliot within this grouping as an equal 'expositor of philosophic truth' (H.S.C., 'George Eliot: As a Poet', p.161). Throughout the review, H.S.C. uses the language of Darwinism to analyse Eliot's poems. For example H.S.C. credits Eliot with revealing the 'higher evolution of the poetic art' because of her ability to 'translate' and negotiate the competing demands of science and art:

²⁵³ Sally Shuttleworth, *George Eliot and Nineteenth-Century Science: The Make-Believe of a Beginning*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984), p. 143.

²⁵⁴ Rosemary Ashton, 'A Note on the Text', in *Middlemarch, a Study of Provincial Life*, (London: Penguin Classics, [1871 - 1872] 2003), (p. xxv). Given the 35 day transit time between London and the Cape, and the high priority the Cape colonists placed on keeping up to date with the newest literary productions England, it seems odd that H.S.C has not acquainted himself with *Middlemarch* by the time he wrote his review of Eliot's works.

Here Art and Science join hands and stand together upon common ground, mutually aiding and supplementing each other (pp.162 – 163).

The individual poems are also dissected with scientific precision. H.S.C. supposes that the 'semi-narrative, semi-dramatic' form of 'The Spanish Gypsy' was deliberately chosen to allow Eliot to meditate upon the moral and emotional problems faced by the heroine, Fadelma. The plot of 'The Spanish Gypsy' is hinged upon the 'influence of blood-inheritance', as Faldema is unable to resist the influence of her 'innate' gypsy nature (p.165 and 166). H.S.C. has picked up on Eliot's interest in evolutionary thinking and uses the jargon of the discipline to analyse Eliot's work, in order to reveal the relationship that she creates between science and art.²⁵⁵

In his analysis of 'Armngart: A Tragedy' and 'The Legend of Jubal', H.S.C. moves from evolution to philosophy, focussing on Eliot's use of music:

Music is George Eliot's medium of expression for the most ravishing and elevated of human emotions (H.S.C, 'George Eliot: As a Poet', p.167).

Apparently unaware of Eliot and Spencer's friendship, H.S.C. aligns Eliot's use of music to Herbert Spencer's essay on music and the emotions, to suggest that musical appreciation offers Eliot's characters an aid to achieving a 'higher happiness' than would ordinarily be possible (p.168).²⁵⁶ Thus although H.S.C. may not have been entirely up to date with Eliot's work, he uses his literary reviews to show off his awareness of current trends in scientific and philosophical thought. Eliot's poetry is held up for praise once again because of her powers of characterisation and her ability to interweave imaginative arts with science and philosophy. Eliot's literature therefore did far more than merely remind homesick colonists of England. Rather, her books facilitated debates about national and literary identity, and helped local literary-minded men, such as Thomas Fuller, structure a public conversation and defend novels from the attacks against them. The reviews in the *Cape Monthly Magazine* also demonstrate the colonists' intellectual engagement with Eliot's works, as the focus is

²⁵⁵ Gillian Beer, *Darwin's Plots: Evolutionary Narrative in Darwin, George Eliot, and Nineteenth-Century Fiction*, 2nd edn (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000).

²⁵⁶ Herbert Spencer, 'The Origin and Function of Music', *Fraser's Magazine for Town and Country*, October 1857, pp. 396 - 407.

less on a sentimental response to Eliot's evocations of days gone past in rural England, and more on her skill as a writer and her insights as a thinker.

Five years after the George Eliot reviews were published in the *Cape Monthly Magazine* another stand-alone review, this time of Anthony Trollope's *South Africa*, appeared (June, 1878). The article was again attributed to the writer simply by their initials, S.R.N.²⁵⁷ The reviewer presents a balanced assessment of the characteristics of Trollope's latest publication. Whilst S.R.N. is quick to call *South Africa* a 'capital book', and to recommend Trollope's 'cheery, chatty, amusing, and instructive' writing style, he also assesses the book carefully and critically to prevent the article from becoming a 'eulogy' (p.362 and 372). Trollope is commended for his powers of observation and S.R.N. applauds the fact that the English author involved himself in the activities he observed, and got to know the local people (p.363). However, the reviewer then launches an account of the many factual and interpretative errors that Trollope makes in his book. For example, S.R.N. points out Trollope relies heavily on locally written historical source material, yet still gets historical dates and details incorrect (p.364). As a result, *South Africa* is deficient 'as regards fresh information or new and original views on our political and social condition' (p.362). S.R.N. also argues that Trollope misunderstands the demographics of the Eastern and Western parts of the Cape Colony, and that he misrepresents the details of a war in 1835 between the British and the Xhosa people, amongst many other inaccuracies and errors of omission (pp.365 – 367). S.R.N. finds this inaccuracy troubling 'when all eyes are turned to the Cape', looking for up to date information on the annexation of the Transvaal (p.366). S.R.N. attributes these mistakes to Trollope's method of writing on the road – 'we feel that a jolting cart and a flying trip were not the means best adapted for obtaining a very correct summary' (p.367) and later:

[...] a Cape cart and a Cape road are not suited for this kind of work [...] Many of Mr. Trollope's notes must have been quite illegible at the end of the journey, and this will of course account for the errors (p.371).

²⁵⁷ Again, the *South African Dictionary of National Biography* does not contain any entries for an individual with these initials. I will again assume that S.R.N is male, so as not to belabour writing about him.

The Cape carts which Trollope was so reliant on during his trip are thus identified as the root cause of Trollope's mistakes. It would appear that the gaps in the Cape's communicative and transport system, which Trollope was so concerned about, also unknowingly influenced his writing.

While S.R.N. used Trollope's factual inaccuracies to reveal his lack of care and hurried approach to writing, Trollope's errors of conclusion and interpretation were taken much more seriously. This is because they broadcast inaccurate information about South Africa to the world, and had the power to mislead potential emigrants to the Cape, as well as potential investors (p.372 and p.374). S.R.N. defends Cape Town against Trollope's criticisms of its lack of municipal infrastructure – 'it is not a "beastly place"' – and he contradicts Trollope's assertion that the Public Library was not well-supported by arguing that the subscribers preferred to read at home rather than in the reading rooms (p.370). However, the most serious error of interpretation that S.R.N. identifies is that Trollope 'leaves too unfavourable an impression as to the suitability of the Colony for white men' (p.372). Defending the small British population in the Cape, S.R.N. argues that South Africans are 'very fond of elbow room', and that the small population allows the colonists the space to have larger farms (p.370). Rather than focussing on the diminutive population size, S.R.N. recommends that readers of *South Africa* should instead be made aware of the colony's successes, namely the booming trade, rich farmlands, and general air of prosperity (p.368). Whilst S.R.N. acknowledges that British workers face competition in the labour market because of the large black population, he argues that skilled and conscientious English workers will find work faster and for better remuneration in the Cape than in England (p.368-369). Trollope's observation that South Africa is 'a country of black men' is contradicted by S.R.N., who reiterates that hard working English people will not struggle to find employment (Trollope, *South Africa*, p.454 and S.R.N., p.374.) S.R.N. ends the review by commenting again on the limitations of Trollope's writing style:

Taking the book merely as a record of the impressions left by the Colony upon the mind of an able, observant, and candid man in a hurried scamper through it, we can afford to speak of it in terms of the highest praise (p.374).

The review of Anthony Trollope's *South Africa* was therefore quite dissimilar to the earlier reviews of George Eliot's works. Whilst H.S.C. focussed on emphasising Eliot's skills as an observer of human nature and distiller of philosophical truths, S.R.N. is more interested in how Anthony Trollope's

book depicts the colonists in South Africa and how these representations could influence outside perceptions of the colony.

The importance that S.R.N. places on outsiders' perceptions of South Africa can be seen in the final paragraph of his review. In it he expresses his appreciation for Trollope's sympathetic depiction of the colonists he met, stating that previous 'illustrious visitors' had not been so kind, and had lampooned the Cape colonists 'for the mere purpose of raising smile' (p.374). It is likely that S.R.N. is referring to James Anthony Froude's controversial visits in 1874 and 1875, during which he had stirred up resentment between the English and Dutch settlers in the Cape Colony. Froude advocated confederation between the colonies of the Cape, Natal and the two northerly Boer republics, the Orange Free State and the Transvaal, all of which he thought should be brought under British rule. He made a number of speeches criticising the Cape's government and also aroused hostility within the Boer Republics (Dubow, 'How British?', p.6).²⁵⁸ In January 1877 Froude defended his antagonistic behaviour in the Cape in an article published in the *Quarterly Review*.²⁵⁹ In the article, his comments about the anti-convict agitation in 1851 were sure to raise the hackles of the Cape colonists. Froude accused the English settlers of 'vanity' and called their protests 'uncalled for and silly'. He reiterated that he thought 'the irritation absurd, and the conduct of the people unjustifiable' because they did not allow the convicts to sully the 'sacred soil of South Africa', and he labelled the Cape Colony 'ungrateful and ungracious' (Froude, pp.118 – 120). The 'abiding resentment' occasioned by Froude's visit thus prompted S.R.N. to commend Trollope for not causing unnecessary offence to the colonists by being 'unfair or ill-natured' (S.R.N., p.374).²⁶⁰ This is curious, as the next chapter of this thesis will show that some of Trollope's less than complimentary letters about South Africa to Trübner had been published early, while Trollope was still in the country (Davidson, 'Introduction' p.12). However, although blunt, Trollope's descriptions of the English colonists and the Cape Colony were not as derogatory or patronising as Froude's. S.R.N. thus

²⁵⁸ Ciaran Brady, *James Anthony Froude: An Intellectual Biography of a Victorian Prophet*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), pp. 297 - 320.

²⁵⁹ James Anthony Froude, 'Papers Relative to the Cape of Good Hope, Presented to Parliament, 1835 – 1875', *Quarterly Review*, January 1877, pp. 105 - 145.

²⁶⁰ The first quotation is from J. H. Davidson, 'Introduction', in *South Africa*, ed. by J. H. Davidson, (Cape Town: A. Balkema, 1973), pp. 1-26 (p. 4).

attempted to negotiate his desire to express gratefulness for Trollope's fair descriptions of the Colony, whilst also pointing out the many inaccuracies and misinterpretations that the writer made during his fleeting visit to the colony. These errors were particularly damaging as they came at a time when many metropolitan commentators, who had previously viewed South Africa as 'dull', were interested on the colony because of the conflict between the Dutch and the English over the confederation of South Africa and the annexation of the diamond fields by the British Empire.

The Cape colonists were right to be concerned about how Trollope depicted them, since metropolitan reviews of *South Africa* focussed on the Cape's limits as a settlement colony. For example, the *Saturday Review* in February 1878 interpreted Trollope's descriptions of the Cape as follows:

A handful of struggling English people making bad brandy, collecting feathers, and cropping bad wool hardly answers to our ordinary notions of a colony at all.²⁶¹

The *British Quarterly Review* echoed this in April 1878, albeit in less pejorative language, writing:

Mr Trollope's view of the colony is not sanguine; he does not think it has answered its purpose; its trade is falling off; the industries that promised to prosper in it are either stopped or languishing; while another Kafir war is in progress [...].²⁶²

South Africa's usefulness to the imperial project as a settlement colony was thus called into question by Trollope's book. The *Edinburgh Review* instead focussed on South Africa's strategic importance to Britain, stating:

It would be difficult to show that the people of the United Kingdom derive any direct advantage from the possessions of the Crown in South Africa, except that which consists in the occupation of an important naval and commercial station [...].²⁶³

The Cape colonists, with their fragile sense of nationhood and national identity therefore came under attack from metropolitan commentators because of Trollope's assessment of the social, political and economic state of South Africa. Their concerns about colonial inferiority in the face of metropolitan condescension, which they had expressed throughout the history of the free press in the Cape Colony, were realised.

²⁶¹ 'Reviews: Trollope's *South Africa*', *Saturday Review*, 23 February 1878, pp. 241 - 243 (p. 242).

²⁶² 'Contemporary Literature: *South Africa* by Anthony Trollope', *British Quarterly Review*, April 1878, pp. 556 - 557 (p. 556).

²⁶³ 'South Africa', *Edinburgh Review*, April 1878, pp. 534 - 566 (p. 544).

The reviews of George Eliot and Anthony Trollope's works in the *Cape Monthly Magazine* reveal the intellectual interests and the self-consciousness of the Cape colonists. H.S.C.'s reviews of George Eliot's novels and poetry debated the true function of literature, and allowed the reviewer to exhibit his scientific knowledge to his local readers. Eliot's works were also used by the colonists as aids to negotiate their changing sense of colonial identity, as seen in Fuller's speech in 1878. Fuller's speech came at a pertinent time, shortly after Anthony Trollope's *South Africa* had been published, and one month before S.R.N.'s review of the book was published in the *Cape Monthly Magazine*. Uncertainty of nationhood combined with Trollope's concerns about South Africa's usefulness as a settlement colony combined to make for an occasionally defensive and self-conscious review. What is particularly interesting about these reviews is their contrasting approach to place. When the book being reviewed in the *Cape Monthly Magazine* was about South Africa, locality was very important. However, while George Eliot's novels were producing a local knowledge of the Midlands for her English readers, her colonial readers abstracted her books, withdrawing the substance of the narratives with little regard for their English contexts. Eliot's books were not being read in South Africa for nostalgia for the country, as the old country is quite easily taken out of the reviews in favour of focussing on the everlasting values contained within her works.

Female readers and the *South African Ladies Companion*

In the opening of this chapter, I promised to examine how print culture in the Cape Colony was not simply transplanted from England into the Cape, but was adapted and moulded to suit the needs of the local readers.²⁶⁴ This has been seen to some extent in the previous sections, through an examination of the elite, white, male-dominated publishing spheres of the *South African Journal*, *South*

²⁶⁴ This is in contrast to Edna Bradlow's assessment of the Cape's literary achievements. She argues that the Cape's intellectual circle was 'undistinguished' because of its insularity and geographical distance from London. Furthermore, she claims that rather than developing their own modes of thought, the Cape colonists imported them, unadapted, from London. Whilst this may be true of the structure of the literary journals considered herein, I hope that I have shown that the imaginary and scientific content of the *Cape Monthly Magazine* was more sophisticated than Bradlow allows for (Edna Bradlow, 'The Culture of a Colonial Elite: The Cape of Good Hope in the 1850s', *Victorian Studies*, 29. 3 (1986), pp. 387-403 (p. 396).

African Commercial Advertiser and the *Cape Monthly Magazine*. However, this focus on elite white culture risks privileging ‘masculine’ forms of writing and obscuring the other forms of literature present in the Cape Colony at the time. For example, Archie Dick and Isabel Hofmeyr have both written compelling accounts of non-white readership and print production in South Africa.²⁶⁵ Furthermore, whilst the intellectually elite literary culture established in the Cape can be taken as a sign of its maturity, the small cohort of contributors, editors and readers of this literary output had an arguably narrow focus on male-dominated topics. In effect, by rejecting unworthy contributions to the *South African Journal* and the *Cape Monthly Magazine*, the founders of the two most influential periodicals in the Cape acted as self-appointed censors of local literary output. The narrow, male-dominated focus also rendered the Cape’s literary products unrepresentative of the wider settler population, as female colonists were relegated to the background. This section aims to address this briefly, by considering the reading material on offer to women in the Cape in the 1850’s, and considering how literature and culture in the Cape could support colonial ‘ladyhood’, by acting as a civilising force.

In their Preface to the first issue of the *Cape Monthly Magazine* in January 1857, Cole and Noble refer to their publication as a ‘blushing *Debutant*’ waiting for a ‘buzz of applause’ from their readers (‘Preface’, p.i). Describing the *Cape Monthly Magazine* as a debutant introduces an immediate gender implication, as a *debutant* is usually a male performer, making his first appearance on stage. The magazine itself, as we have seen in the previous section, was made up of a predominantly masculine editorial and contributor cohort. That isn’t to say that female contributors were excluded from the *Cape Monthly Magazine*, but rather that their contributions were not as prominent as those of the men. Indeed, even when articles and stories were written by women, readers often assumed that they were written by men. For example, in his memoirs, Alfred Cole writes about a controversy caused by an

²⁶⁵ Dick unveils the ‘hidden history’ of South Africa’s common readers, from the mid-seventeenth century through to the 1990’s. He contradicts the commonly-held view that the Cape’s slaves and indigenous people were illiterate and uneducated by revealing the reading cultures that were in existence at the time. Hofmeyr has written extensively on her research into oral and print literacy amongst the many races and nationalities in South Africa. Her most recent monograph, *Ghandi’s Printing Press* is an examination of Ghandi’s South African periodical, *Indian Opinion*. It draws a parallel between the mechanics underlying the production of the magazine and the evolution of Ghandi’s political ethics. (Dick, *Hidden History*, Hofmeyr, *Tale That is Told*, Hofmeyr, *Gandhi’s Printing Press*, Isabel Hofmeyr, *The Portable Bunyan: A Transnational History of The Pilgrim’s Progress*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004).

article published in the *Cape Monthly Magazine* which, although very ‘amusing’, poked fun at the dress and manners of the Cape’s young ladies at a ball (*Reminiscences*, p.63). A letter of complaint sent to Cole spoke of the writer of the piece as ‘one of those flippant gentlemen from England who sneer at everything Colonial, including the women [...] although they don’t object to marry them’ (pp.63 – 64). This was meant to be a dig at Cole, who had married a Cape-born Englishwoman. ‘The fun of the thing was’, Cole writes, that the article was not written by him, but rather by a ‘clever and lively’ young English-born lady, the daughter of a visiting Admiral (p.64).

Cole also depicted himself falling foul of the assumption that a female contributor was male in one of his amusing ‘Rejected Basket’ articles published in 1858.²⁶⁶ In it, he presents himself as ‘Mr Editor’, who with his wife, Mrs Editor, has to go through previously rejected submissions to make up some more copy for the *Cape Monthly Magazine*. Mrs Editor encouragingly assists the grumpy ‘Mr Editor’, finding him a ‘very pretty’ story called ‘Leonora’, which has been submitted on gilt-edged paper, tied with a pink ribbon (p.44). The story opens dramatically with Lorenzo standing in his bed chamber at night about to plunge a dagger into his heart when Leonora bursts in ‘with hair dishevelled and toilet all unmade’, who grabs the dagger and then faints. However, despite all of the somewhat stereotypical clues to the contrary, the article’s humour lies in the fact that Mr Editor assumes the writer is a man. He is astonished when Mrs Editor informs him that the writer is a woman:

“Written by a lady - humph! ... Do you know I’m afraid it’s approaching the improper? ‘Toilet all unmade’, means, I should say-” (p.45).

To which his wife responds by telling him not to be so ‘prosaic’. Whilst poking fun at himself as a grumpy editor, Cole also displays his rather stereotypical expectations of women writers, writing sensational fiction on impractical paper tied with a pink ribbon. There is also the implication that the press in the Cape had a role to play as moral regulators, carefully selecting appropriate reading matter for their readers. Cole thus participates in fashioning and moulding the Cape Colony’s literary output, and how local writers thought and expressed themselves. By lampooning the efforts of imagined

²⁶⁶ Alfred Whaley Cole, 'The "Rejected Basket" Again', *Cape Monthly Magazine*, January 1858, pp. 43 - 48.

women writers he also reinforces the gender politics of readership in the Cape, in line with the vision of Lydia Linguish which was evoked by the committee of the South African Public Library in Chapter One of this thesis.

However, women writers could and did contribute to the *Cape Monthly Magazine*. The most well-known series of articles written by a woman was published in the second series of the *Cape Monthly Magazine* between 1870 and 1871. 'Life in the Cape – by a Lady' was presented as a series of letters written by newly-arrived colonist, who had come to the Cape to join her husband, Captain B. Set in the 1860's; her letters describe her first impressions of Cape Town. Her vignettes include descriptions of setting up her household, attending balls, hiking up Table Mountain, and taking short trips to outlying towns. The writer of the letters enigmatically signs them with just her initials, S.G.B., and the 'Publisher's Postscript' of a 1960's reprint of the letters in book form claims that the mystery of who 'the Lady' was captivated the *Cape Monthly Magazine's* readers.²⁶⁷ The same postscript quotes an article from the *South African Bookman* in 1911 which names the writer as a Mrs Ross, married to a Doctor Ross who also made contributions to the *Cape Monthly Magazine* in the 1870's. The mystery of who the 'Lady' was notwithstanding, the popularity of her articles amongst the local audience is attested to by the publication of a collection of her letters, which is one of the first instances I have seen of material from the *Cape Monthly Magazine* being reprinted in book format.²⁶⁸

Women contributors were therefore not as infrequent as the initial figuring of the *Cape Monthly Magazine* as a *debutant* first suggests. However, despite what seems to have been a talented (albeit presumably rather small) cohort of female writers in the Colony, the representations of women in some of the other submissions to the journal display some stereotypically prejudiced attitudes toward them. A browse through the first series of the *Cape Monthly Magazine* shows English women represented as money-grabbing boarding house mistresses; vacuous romance-addled teenagers; or Mrs-Bennett-style-mothers intent on marrying their girls off to any new Englishmen recently arrived

²⁶⁷ 'Publisher's Postscript: Who was the Lady?', in *Life at the Cape a Hundred Years Ago, by a Lady*, (Cape Town: C. Struik, 1963), pp. 117 - 118.

²⁶⁸ The second instance being *Selected articles from the Cape Monthly Magazine*, published in 1978, and cited above.

in the colony.²⁶⁹ Being a woman of Dutch descent was even more unfortunate, due to the tensions which still existed between the English and the Dutch in the Cape Colony. Despite being temporarily united in an urban context during the anti-convict crisis in the 1850's, the English settlers still had a prejudiced view of the rural Dutch, or Boers. Typically typecast as slovenly peasants, it meant that the literary descriptions of Boer women in the *Cape Monthly Magazine* were often uncomplimentary. For example, in an epistolary-styled article titled 'Letters from the Country: Births, Marriages and Deaths', the correspondent relates their experiences of attending various Boer ceremonies.²⁷⁰ The women partaking in these activities are described as being big boned and as aging badly – 'they do not wear well' (p.23). The literary representations of white women in the Cape Colony in the *Cape Monthly Magazine* therefore seems to deny them the agency and intellectual abilities that they display in their own writings.

Whilst the *Cape Monthly Magazine* admirably filled the months-long gap between deliveries of fresh literary commodities from the United Kingdom, there was little in terms of locally produced material that was targeted toward a specifically feminine audience in the Cape Colony. One of the few mid-nineteenth-century periodicals to do so, the *South African Ladies' Companion*, was founded in 1858, but only survived for a few months. Unlike the *Cape Monthly Magazine*, which can still be found in holdings in the British Library, as well as in various libraries in South Africa, Scotland, America, Canada and New Zealand, the *South African Ladies' Companion* is only held at the Cape Town branch of the National Library of South Africa – presumably as a result of its short lifespan.²⁷¹ The three copies that are held in the National Library of South Africa are the first three numbers of Volume 1 of the series. The *South African Ladies' Companion* was presented in a very similar format and typography to the *Cape Monthly Magazine*, as well as the imported British periodicals, and was of a

²⁶⁹ See for example Alfred Whaley Cole, 'How I Came to Emigrate', *Cape Monthly Magazine*, January 1857, pp. 11 - 21; 'A Tale of Shocking Slander', *Cape Monthly Magazine*, February 1857, pp. 78 - 85; 'Kafirs and Kafirland - a Settler's Story: Matrimony', *Cape Monthly Magazine*, October 1857, pp. 199 - 210; Coelebs, 'The Boarding-House Difficulty, or Coelebs in Search of a Lodging', *Cape Monthly Magazine*, November 1861, pp. 277 - 286.

²⁷⁰ 'Letters from the Country: Births, Marriages and Deaths', *Cape Monthly Magazine*, July 1861, pp. 20 - 28.

²⁷¹ 'Worldcat Online Library Catalogue', <<http://www.worldcat.org/title/cape-monthly-magazine/oclc/31981776>> [accessed 18 June 2014].

‘portable size, for the convenience of Ladies’.²⁷² It was also a miscellany, only instead of a mixture of fiction and intellectually rigorous articles of local interest like the *Cape Monthly Magazine*, the literary mix in the *South African Ladies’ Companion* is almost purely of different types of romantic fiction, along with articles on fashion and household hints.

The opening ‘Address’ by the anonymous male editor is peculiar, as he begins by admitting that English is not his first language and that he finds it difficult to express himself in anything other than his native tongue. Despite this limitation, the editor displays his ambitious aims for the *South African Ladies’ Companion*, stating that he wants to ‘cull from foreign fields, especially French, Italian, Spanish and Portuguese, a “bouquet” of flowers’ for his female audience’s reading pleasure.²⁷³ Presumably his status as a ‘foreigner’ would help him to harvest this bouquet of literary delights by giving him access to the sources of these stories, although these sources remain unacknowledged throughout the magazine (‘Address’, p.1). The full title of the publication, the *South African Ladies’ Companion: A Repertoire of the Literature of all Nations*, also hints at the editor’s ambitious aims. Unlike the *Cape Monthly Magazine*, which tethered itself to the local community through its title, the *South African Ladies’ Companion* was intended to appeal to ‘the Ladies of South Africa in general, and of the Cape Colony in particular’ (p.1). This suggests that the Cape’s female readers were less parochial than the representations of them in the *Cape Monthly Magazine* presented. Indeed, the editor of the *South African Ladies’ Companion* claims that the magazine is a necessary addition to the Cape’s literary marketplace because of the ‘heterogeneous (pardon the expression, perhaps I should have said diffuse or varied) character of the inhabitants of the “Cape of Storms”[...]’ (p.1). Female readers in the Cape Colony were thus imagined as a diverse group, which needed to be provided with a variety of literatures in order to be entertained and informed.

It appears that the editor of the *South African Ladies’ Companion* hoped that his magazine would become something of a staple amongst young Cape girls, as this short vignette shows:

“Mamma, why do they call it the ‘Ladies’ Companion?” (sighing) “That is not the kind of Companion I like best”. “Well, my dear, but in his *absence* it will beguile the time, when you feel *ennui*, it will refresh you, when disappointed at the non-arrival of his usual *billet doux*, the perusal of it

²⁷² Back cover to *South African Ladies’ Companion*, 15 February 1858.

²⁷³ ‘Our Address’, *South African Ladies’ Companion*, 15 February 1858, pp. 1 - 2.

will dissipate your gloom; when papa says he has no money to spare for a new dress, by reading it you will find something to reconcile your mind to the disappointment.”²⁷⁴

The magazine was thus intended to make up for frustrations in love, general feelings of despondency, as well as pecuniary and sartorial disappointments. To borrow a phrase from Kate Flint’s *The Woman Reader*, the editor of the *South African Ladies’ Companion* displays a commonly held ‘[...] belittling assumption that women read for escape, rather than for intellectual or political stimulation’ (Flint, p.143). Indeed, the fact that the *South African Ladies’ Companion* only survived three numbers, whilst demonstrating the continued volatility of the Cape’s literary market, also suggests that the editor of the magazine misjudged the literary tastes of his colonial women readers.

The *South African Ladies’ Companion*’s lack of longevity can only be speculated at, but perhaps had something to do firstly with the poor quality of the magazine, and secondly with the already well-populated local periodical market in the Cape. It may also have been because the editor misjudged the literary tastes of his readers. An Edwardian review of the reading habits of colonial girls written by Constance A. Barnicoat and published in *Nineteenth Century* suggests that young colonial women were ‘surprisingly’ well-read.²⁷⁵ Using the British Empire League’s educational arm in order to access schools across the empire in Canada, India, South Africa, Australia and New Zealand, girls between the ages of 15 and 18 were asked questions such as ‘What books do you read for recreation?’, ‘Which English classics do you like best?’, and ‘Which of the monthly magazines do you read?’ (p.939-940). The girls’ favourite ‘great woman novelist’ was George Eliot, whilst their favourite book was reportedly *The Mill on the Floss*, echoing the popularity of the novel amongst the subscribers at the South African Public Library (p.945). On the whole, colonial girls were found to be ‘surprisingly’ well read, although Barnicoat mentions that their results were pulled down by ‘native girls’ in Indian schools and Dutch girls in South African schools, because of their imperfect English and limited opportunities to read for pleasure (p.941). The colonial girls as a group were reported reading fewer ‘girls’ books, and South African girls in particular were noted for preferring ‘bloodcurdling’ adventure stories and for having a fondness for boys’ stories (p.943). Barnicoat attributes this to their active,

²⁷⁴ ‘Maternal Advice’, *South African Ladies’ Companion*, 1 March 1858, p. 64.

²⁷⁵ Constance A. Barnicoat, ‘The Reading of the Colonial Girl’, *The Nineteenth Century and After: a Monthly Review*, 60. 358 (December 1906), pp. 939 – 950.

outdoor lifestyles. Perhaps this explains the *South African Ladies' Companion's* short life-span, as the feminine fluff it published was not appropriate for its energetic audience.

The girls' answers to the question about which magazines they read is also revealing. Barnicoat reported that 'many evidently do not know what is meant by [...] "monthly magazines"' (p.949). That being said, those that answered a question about their preferred publications mentioned British periodicals such as the *Strand*, the *Pall Mall*, the *Nineteenth Century*, *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine* and occasionally the *Fortnightly Review*. This preponderance of British periodicals in the colonials girls' reading lists brings me to my second suggestion about the cause of the demise of the *South African Ladies' Companion*: its inability to compete not only with better-written local rivals such as the *Cape Monthly Magazine*, but also with imported British periodicals. As this chapter has already demonstrated, the improvements in mail steamer communication between the Cape and England meant that a journey that had taken up to three months in the 1820's was shortened to 35 days by 1858. This date coincides almost exactly with both the founding and demise of the *South African Ladies' Companion*. Whilst the *Cape Monthly Magazine's* editors were able to rally from the effects of the competition from overseas rivals by making their publication more explicitly colonial, the *South African Ladies' Companion* never returned to the literary market.²⁷⁶ The imported British periodicals that Barnicoat's girls reported reading were therefore incredibly influential upon the Cape Colony's burgeoning print industry, as they moulded its inception, but also contributed to the downfall of some of its products.

Barnicoat's attempt to 'classify and determine the practices of the female reader' was a trend seen in the later years of the Victorian era, according to Kate Flint. She argues that reading was interpreted as a 'marker of sexual differentiation', and this can certainly be seen in the annual reports of the South African Public Library, where the so-called 'novel debate' raged throughout the

²⁷⁶ Other periodicals aimed toward women readers were only introduced to the Cape's market later in the nineteenth century, with titles such as the *South African Domestic Monthly* (1896 – 1916). Other titles included inserts or articles specifically for female readers, for example the *South African Illustrated Magazine: an Artistic Monthly* (1890 – 1901) contained housewifely hints for its female readers, while the *African Review of Mining* (1892 – 1904) occasionally carried inserts designed for a female readership. (With thanks to Melissa Free for pointing me toward these turn-of-the-century titles, when we attended the 'Print Culture and Gender in the British Empire' conference at the University of Warwick in June 2015.)

nineteenth century (Flint, p.154). As we saw in Chapter One, the South African Public Library, along with other colonial and metropolitan libraries, was concerned about the high circulation of novels amongst its subscribers. As Flint has demonstrated, the stereotypical association between femininity and novel reading was a prevalent concern, not only in metropolitan areas, but in the colonies as well. The previous chapter of this thesis discussed Governor Barkly's address to the subscribers of the South African Public Library in 1871, in which he had likened the Cape's female readers to Lydia Languish, waiting for her waiting woman to bring her the latest 'trashy romances'. What is more, in his lecture he urged the Library's Committee to 'manfully strive' to reduce the number of novels in circulation in the Cape Colony by refusing to make any 'concession to the "girl of the period"' (Barkly, p.71). This figuring of men as the regulators of women's reading matter was certainly not uncommon in the nineteenth century, but when we consider that the outdoorsy and active young women of the Cape were reading a wide range of literature, this description of novel-obsessive women becomes very reductive. Literature, which was meant to mould 'ideal' colonists, is instead implicated in the intellectual subversion of the Cape's female population. However, by painting the girl of the period as a lethargic novel-reader, Governor Barkley positioned the women of the Cape as passive consumers of trashy literature, which, as demonstrated, was not the case at all – the Cape's colonial women were adventurers, writers, readers and thinkers.

This comparison of two contemporaneous magazines published in the Cape Colony has highlighted some of the issues that surrounded ideas of feminine readership and authorship in the mid-nineteenth century. Whilst it is inadvisable to speculate about the Cape's women readers, Constance Barnicoat's survey of young white female colonial readers in the early twentieth century suggests that outdoorsy Capetonian girls were more discerning consumers of a large variety of literature than the image of Lydia Languish suggests. The *South African Ladies' Companion* is thus a clear example of an inept attempt to repackage other metropolitan publications into a magazine geared toward the Cape Colony's female readers. Rather than adapting his material to his colonial audience, the editor harvested pieces from other publications and reprinted them in his magazine. His lack of recontextualisation rendered the *South African Ladies' Companion* irrelevant to his readers in

the Cape, especially as they were able to access this type of literature directly, amongst the imported magazines and periodicals in the South African Public Library.

Women have also been shown to have been active and engaged participants in the Cape's periodical industry. The articles that they wrote prompted discussion amongst the local community and helped to mould and encourage the Cape's literary culture. Whilst the threat of imported magazines may have temporarily damaged the prospects of local periodicals such as the *Cape Monthly Magazine*, locally rooted contributions by female writers, such as the 'Letters from the Cape' series, helped to shore the journal up in the face of this imperial competition, and helped to make the *Cape Monthly Magazine* the longest-running locally produced periodical in the nineteenth century.

Conclusion

In June 1873 an article by Thomas Fuller, fan of George Eliot and future host to Anthony Trollope during his trip to South Africa, appeared in the *Cape Monthly Magazine*. Titled "'Home" after Nine Years' Absence', it details the changes that he observed in London after living in the Cape Colony for almost a decade.²⁷⁷ After disembarking from his ship at the Victoria Docks, Fuller takes the train to Kentish Town, and is startled that he cannot recognise any landmarks, apart from the old Bow Church (p.324). This unsettling recognition of his unfamiliarity with his 'home' repeats the anxiety expressed in the 'Homeward Bound' article that British settlers in the Cape were at risk of losing touch with metropolitan developments and changes. Moreover, colonial readers, reading about Fuller's sense of alienation from his hometown must have experienced heightened feelings of anxiety, as they were gaining this information about metropolitan progress second-hand, while still in the Cape Colony. By placing the word 'home' in the title of the article in inverted commas, Fuller indicates that London has been supplanted by Cape Town, in terms of familiarity if not affection, and this hints at the dislocating influence that colonialism could have upon British settler identity.

²⁷⁷ Thomas Ekins Fuller, "'Home" after Nine Years' Absence', *Cape Monthly Magazine*, June 1873, pp. 321 - 330.

The present analysis of the nineteenth-century history of the periodical press in South Africa demonstrates that white belonging in the colony was articulated through a sense of loss of home, and underwritten by an awareness of the precariousness of the settler experience. Thomas Pringle and John Fairbairn articulated their frustrations with Lord Somerset's draconian press censorship by lamenting their loss of 'rights' as British-born Englishmen. Establishing a colonial press was envisaged as a way to mediate the loss of home and the British way of life, firstly by creating a sense of cultural prestige (all of the other 'important' colonies had a free press) and secondly by advertising and promoting local, colonial developments and discoveries. Literature, which was produced and disseminated by the free press in the Cape Colony, was intended to have a civilising effect upon its readers by introducing them to rational forms of knowledge, packaged in periodicals which mimicked the journals of home.

Printed materials which relied on local contributions had to tread carefully amongst the competing nationalisms in the Cape. English-Dutch relations were often strained, and this was compounded by the increasing sense of colonial nationalism that the colonists were articulating. The *Cape Monthly Magazine's* remit to appeal to all classes of colonial reader was thus situated within challenging market conditions. The need to articulate how it fit into the Cape's literary milieu resulted in a striking self-reflexivity in its editorial voice. The *Cape Monthly Magazine* constantly broadcast its vision of its own significance to the colony in an attempt to establish itself as the writing of the Cape Colony. It provided the small cohort of British colonists in the Cape with a space in which to hold 'elaborate discussions' about local topics, and to articulate their concerns and anxieties about the settler experience (Noble, 'Literary Review', 1862, p.53). Local and imported literature was both a comforting indication that the Cape Colony was civilised enough to support an active literary market, but also dislocating, as the colonists constantly experienced print-based reminders of their distance from the metropole and their colonial inferiority.

3. Anthony Trollope and the South African Postal Service

In this chapter I explore the role that the postal system played in consolidating and extending imperial control over the Cape Colony and South Africa. In particular, I interrogate the applicability of Eileen Cleere's conceptualisation of the post office as a form of:

[...] domesticated imperialism, carrying out colonial imperatives without the oppressive violence and tyranny that traditionally accompanied the promulgation of the British Empire.²⁷⁸

Rather I demonstrate the latent violence and suppression underlying the seemingly benign functioning of my third institution of literary colonialism, showing how this is evident symptomatically in a selection of Anthony Trollope's works. Three episodes from *South Africa* (1878) will be used to extrapolate what Trollope's interest in bureaucracy and infrastructure reveals about how he imagines a successful colony should operate – as an efficiently organised extension of Great Britain. I will argue that Trollope's preoccupation with the systems which hold a colony together is his model for colonial encounter, as he attempts to figure out the structures and networks which keep a colony running and connected to the rest of the empire. This chapter also examines Trollope's novel, *An Old Man's Love* (1884) in order to explore how he conceives of South Africa in his fiction. An analysis of both *South Africa* and *An Old Man's Love* reveals that for Trollope, contact between the individuals that operate within colonial systems and networks can be problematic. When these rudimentary and haphazard systems break down, the points of contact between people allow imperial and colonial power to emerge in their more brutal forms.

Trollope uses physical colonial networks as a means to explore foreign territories and to understand how they work – whether they are efficient, and appropriate for their population. His analysis of such reveals moments of discord and gaps in the colonial system which potentially put the functioning of the network at risk, and display the precariousness of white belonging in South Africa through their inappropriate implementation. My analysis in this chapter is informed by Arjun

²⁷⁸ Eileen Cleere, *Avuncularism: Capitalism, Patriarchy, and Nineteenth-Century English Culture*, (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2004), p. 189.

Appadurai's work on the production of locality under different regimes of communication.²⁷⁹ 'Locality' is a connective property of social life, which is created through networks of 'social immediacy, the technologies of interactivity, and the relativity of contexts' (Appadurai, p.178). Although Appadurai is writing in the context of modern, electronic communication in a way that Trollope clearly isn't, the concept of locality is a useful tool with which to consider how communication technologies, such as the postal service, produced different kinds of interaction in a colonial South African context.

This thesis began with a letter from Bertie Lewes to his father, written in 1866, which describes his visit to the South African Public Library in Cape Town. It is therefore fitting to begin this chapter by considering how letters were sent and received by colonists in South Africa in the mid-nineteenth century. The Cape has a long postal history, starting with the so-called Post Office stones left along Table Bay in the 17th century. These large flat-faced rocks were used by Dutch, Portuguese and English ships making the trip past the Cape to the East to pass letters on to each other, and were inscribed with messages, instructing passing ships that letters were housed beneath them.²⁸⁰ In 1652 the Dutch founded a permanent settlement in the Cape, but the few colonists there still had to rely on passing ships to carry their mail to and from the colony (Jurgens, p.7). The nascent postal network relied on luck rather than formalised systems in order to operate.

A formal Post Office was opened within the walls of the Castle of the Cape of Good Hope in 1791 and provision was made for a postman to make deliveries in the town and to collect payment for postage (Jurgens, p.9). The Post Office remained at this site until the second British occupation of the Cape in the early nineteenth century. In 1816 it was moved into a more central location on what is now Parliament Street, near the Company's Garden, and came under the control of the new British Colonial Government (Jurgens, p.23). By the time Bertie Lewes posted his letter home in 1866 the postal system in the Cape Colony had expanded to become a large network of over 200 local post office branches, organised around the General Post Office in Cape Town and under the control of

²⁷⁹ Arjun Appadurai, "The Production of Locality", in *Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization*, ed. by Arjun Appadurai, (Minnesota: University of Minnesota Press, 1996), pp. 179 - 199.

²⁸⁰ A. A. Jurgens, *The Handstruck Letter Stamps of the Cape of Good Hope from 1792 to 1853: And the Postmarks from 1853 to 1910*, (Cape Town: A.A. Jurgens, 1943), p. 2.

the Cape's Government (Goldblatt, p.80). In the 60 years that had intervened between the start of the British occupation of the Cape and Bertie's arrival, the most notable developments of the postal service in the Cape included: the establishment of a formal ocean mail contract (1851); the founding of a book post with the United Kingdom (1852); the introduction of adhesive postage stamps in 1d. and 4d. denominations (1853); the institution of a uniform postage rate of 6d. between the United Kingdom and the Cape (1857); the creation of a domestic penny post system within the city of Cape Town (1860) and the extension of the book post services to the interior of the colony (1862) (Jurgens, pp.50 – 105).²⁸¹ The expansion of the postal system in South Africa mirrored the colonial expansion of the colony, with new post offices springing up in the new territories along the frontier to service the influx of new settlers. The postal service in South Africa was thus party to the colonisation of these frontier lands.

Whilst Thornton Lewes was aiding colonial expansion through his military action with the Boer Commando, in October 1866 Bertie was learning to navigate the postal system in the Cape in order to communicate his safe arrival to his parents. Bertie's letters would have been posted from the General Post Office on Parliament Street in Cape Town, for which he would have paid 6d. per half-ounce (Jurgens, p.51). From the General Post Office, the letters would have been loaded onto a train to Port Elizabeth, which in 1862 had become the terminal for the ocean mail service between the Cape Colony and the United Kingdom. The letters would have been 35 days in transit before arriving in Plymouth, from whence they would have been delivered by Royal Mail to Eliot and Lewes at their residence, the Priory, near Regent's Park (Goldblatt, p.140). Similarly, Eliot and Lewes's letters would have been posted from their local post office, at the rate of 6d. per half-ounce, and despatched to Plymouth for the voyage to Port Elizabeth. This postage rate covered delivery to anywhere in the Cape Colony (Jurgens, p.51). Once the mail steamer docked in Port Elizabeth, the mail bags would then have been transported by train to the sorting branch of the General Post Office in Cape Town, before finally being delivered, by postman, to Bertie's address in the town. When Bertie joined

²⁸¹ See also Gilbert J. Allis, *Cape of Good Hope: Its Postal History and Postage Stamps*, (London: Stanley Gibbons, 1930), pp. 19 - 20.

Thornie in Natal, the process for the delivery of their letters would have been similar, only once they had been sorted at the General Post Office they would have been transported to their nearest post office branch by the mail carts with which Trollope would become so familiar in 1877. Once the letters were received by the post office branch in Natal they would have been delivered to the Lewes boys' farm by a postman on horseback (Allis, p.16). The Cape's postal system thus worked in tandem with the General Post Office in London, independent from Great Britain's mail system, but nevertheless a conduit for English news, books, and letters in a broad network which spanned the entirety of the Cape Colony, and connected it to other colonies along the coast and in the interior of South Africa.

This cultural conduit, which was an extension of the 'nervous system of Greater Britain', materially aided the expansion of the British Empire in South Africa by giving settlers who moved into the sparsely populated interior a connection to Cape Town, and through that communicative node, to the rest of the British Empire (Belich, p.461). It also furthered Trollope's reach throughout the colony, physically by transporting him in the mail carts, and ideologically through Trollope's role as a high ranking postal official who couldn't resist involving himself in the three incidents that I recount in more detail below. As the postal system in South Africa was modelled on that of the United Kingdom, at times even using decommissioned Royal Mail coaches, Trollope's sphere of influence as a postal inspector spread from London through to South Africa's hinterland (Goldblatt, p.101). In addition to furthering the spread of Trollope's bureaucratic power, the postal service in South Africa also assisted in the spread of imperial power by transporting Trollope in his incarnation as a travel writer. As Anna Johnston argues, travel writing in the nineteenth century 'maps a geography of power and influence' across the empire, by making the unknown knowable and furnishing readers at home with descriptions of the colonies which made up 'Greater Britain'.²⁸² The postal service, in addition to being a cultural and communicative conduit, thus also functioned to

²⁸² Anna Johnston, "'Greater Britain': Late Imperial Travel Writing and the Settler Colonies", in *Oceania and the Victorian Imagination: Where All Things Are Possible*, ed. by Richard D. Fulton and Peter H. Hoffenberg, (Farnham: Ashgate, 2013), pp. 31 - 43 (p. 33).

extend British control and cultural dominance throughout South Africa through Trollope's dual roles as a self-appointed postal inspector abroad and a travel writer.

The Post Office, a fish, and a box of bonnets

Trollope was prompted to make the trip to South Africa in April 1877, after the British annexation of the Transvaal (then known as the Zuid-Afrikaansche Republiek, or ZAR) filled the metropolitan newspapers, and made the prospect of a visit more 'interesting' to him than it had appeared before (*South Africa*, pp. 33 – 34). The ZAR had been settled by Dutch 'trekboers', who had journeyed into South Africa's interior in order to escape British domination in the mid-nineteenth century. The British administration had initially recognised the independence of the ZAR at the Sand River Convention of 1852. However, by the mid-1870's Lord Carnarvon was championing the confederation of the two British colonies of the Cape and Natal with the two Boer republics of the Oranje Vrystaat (the Orange Free State) and the ZAR in order to exploit the possibilities that mineral discoveries across the area promised.²⁸³ However, both groups of white settlers in South Africa were reluctant to participate in a confederation. The English settlers had only recently been granted responsible government which awarded them sovereignty from Britain. This gave them greater political freedom than they had had under representative government, as, rather than reporting to the British Governor, Cape Ministers were directly accountable to the locally elected Cape parliament, under the colony's first Prime Minister, John Molteno. The Dutch were also keen to avoid a confederation of the South African colonies because they wished to remain independent of Britain.²⁸⁴ Nevertheless, following a trip to London in 1876 in which he had met with Carnarvon, Sir

²⁸³ Muriel Evelyn Chamberlain, *The Scramble for Africa*, 3rd edn (London and New York: Routledge, 2013), p. 70; Charles H. Feinstein, *An Economic History of South Africa: Conquest, Discrimination and Development*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 2005), p. 72; Stanley Trapido, 'Imperialism, Settler Identities, and Colonial Capitalism: The Hundred-Year Origins of the 1899 South African War', in *The Cambridge History of South Africa*, ed. by Robert Ross, Anne Kelk Mager, and Bill Nasson, 2 vols (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011) 2, pp. 66 - 101.

²⁸⁴ Shula Marks, 'Class, Culture, and Consciousness in South Africa, 1880–1899', in *The Cambridge History of South Africa*, ed. by Robert Ross, Anne Kelk Mager, and Bill Nasson, 2 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011) 2, pp. 102 - 156 (p. 106).

Theophilus Shepstone, Natal's Secretary for Native Affairs, returned with a commission to annex the ZAR. His efforts were aided by the ZAR's economic difficulties, as well as its recent military losses against the local Bapedi people (Trapido, p.79). As a result, in his Annexation Proclamation, Shepstone was able to justify his actions by arguing that British settlers in the area were at risk because the ZAR was unstable, ungovernable, bankrupt, and dangerously vulnerable to attack by indigenous people.²⁸⁵

Trollope opens *South Africa* by describing how Sir Theophilus Shepstone had 'walked into the Republic with five and twenty policemen and a Union Jack and had taken possession of it'. Trollope viewed it as his duty as a writer with experience of the British colonies to investigate whether the public ought to protest against Shepstone's high-handedness, or celebrate his actions as the expression of a 'righteous cause'. His object was therefore threefold. He wanted to spread information about South Africa to his readers; to add to his own 'stock of knowledge respecting the colonies generally'; and to comment on political and military developments in South Africa (*South Africa*, p.35). The commercially-minded Trollope must also have been aware that the interest in South Africa would have a favourable effect on his book sales!²⁸⁶ Thus from the outset, Trollope's trip was entangled with colonial expansionism, which gave him the opportunity to expand his and his readers' knowledge in the context of sales-boosting military action.

Trollope travelled to South Africa in July 1877 aboard the steamship the *S.S. Caldera*. A caldera is a cauldron, but the social mixing pot in which Trollope found himself was not to his taste. Writing to his son Henry, Trollope scathingly remarked 'I don't like any one on board [...]', and then projected his dislike of his fellow passengers on to his destination:

²⁸⁵ 'Annexation of the South African Republic to the British Empire, 12 April 1877. Proclamation by His Excellency Sir Theophilus Shepstone...', in *Select Constitutional Documents Illustrating South African History, 1795 - 1910*, ed. by G. W. Eybers, (London; New York: George Routledge and Sons, 1918), pp. 448 - 453.

²⁸⁶ The literary market of materials about the Transvaal, and South Africa in general, was expanding. A search of online catalogue of the Foreign and Commonwealth Library's collection held at King's College, London demonstrates that prior to the 1877 annexation of the Transvaal, the library only held 5 books and pamphlets about the region (the ZAR was settled by the Dutch in 1852). However, in the years between the annexation and the First Boer War (1881) the collection amasses a further 15 titles. While this is by no means a reliable indication of what people were reading at the time, it indicates that readers were becoming more interested in developments in Britain's colonies. ('King's College Library Catalogue', <http://library.kcl.ac.uk/F/AU6XYDFXFSUSBDGULGRS2FBXAHV5S7HN1XYE4IAI6C8YQ8K9AN-16214?RN=372505030&pds_handle=GUEST> [accessed 18 November 2014].

I fancy from all I hear and the little I see that I shall find the Cape a most uninteresting place. The people who are going there on board this ship are just the people who would go to an uninteresting colony (*Trollope Letters*, II, p.729).

Trollope's opinion of the Cape did not improve on arrival. Mists obscured the much-anticipated famous view of Table Bay, and the Customs officials he dealt with when he disembarked from the *Caldera* were frustratingly inefficient. Trollope's dissatisfaction is evident in his first description of Cape Town in a letter to John Blackwood: 'It seems a poor, niggery, yellowfaced, half-bred sort of a place, with an ugly Dutch flavour about it' (*Trollope Letters*, II, p. 731). Trollope's description draws attention to Cape Town's mixed racial demographic, as he lists the wide range of cultures present in Cape Town – indigenous African people, Dutch colonisers, and the Malay servants who had been imported to the Cape as slaves by the Dutch the previous century. As the capital of a British colony, Cape Town was therefore disappointing – its civil servants did not behave as government officials should, and its population was too racially mixed to be called English (*South Africa*, p.78).

Trollope began his tour of Cape Town soon after he arrived. He called his inquiries 'inspections', which reveals his interrogatory approach to overseas research (*Trollope Letters*, II, p.733).²⁸⁷ Trollope toured all of the town's 'civilised institutions' – the Cathedral, the Library, the Museum, the Botanical Gardens, Government House and the Observatory (*South Africa*, p.84). He was critical of these establishments, pointing out the defects of the animal specimens in the museum, complaining about the 'dreary' botanical gardens, and calling the Cathedral 'anything but beautiful' (pp.80 – 82). The Library seems to have attracted Trollope's attention primarily because of its rare and valuable Grey Collection. Trollope writes that:

It would be invidious to say that there are volumes there so rare that one begrudges them to a distant Colony which might be served as well by ordinary editions as by scarce and perhaps unreadable specimens (p.81).

Yet Trollope verges toward the invidious in an unprinted extract in the manuscript of *South Africa* in which he suggests that '[...] ill-natured human nature is tempted to think that the donor cannot

²⁸⁷ Inspection is a word with particularly colonial connotations. In an Indian context, 'inspections' suggests a specific kind of circuitous, itinerating movement, as the Military Engineer Services of the British Indian army was housed in 'inspection bungalows'. With thanks to Professor Dilip Menon for pointing this out to me. (Anthony D. King, *Colonial Urban Development: Culture, Social Power, and Environment*, (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1976), p. 92.).

himself have cared for such books', presumably because Grey would never see them again (footnote to p.81). The Cape Colony's distance from the metropolitan centre of the empire disqualifies it from being a suitable host to such bibliographic treasures, and its unsophisticated population would be better suited to 'ordinary' editions of these books and manuscripts. Perhaps Trollope's commercial mind was also considering whether Cape Town's library would be a suitable home for his own volumes, just as Boston's had in the 1860's.²⁸⁸ The ability of these institutions to inculcate a sense of 'civilisation' amongst the Cape's population therefore seems to be severely limited due to the fact that they are imperfectly pitched for their colonial users – they are either not sophisticated enough, or they display a level of culture that is too high for the unrefined, racially-mixed population.

Just as he had inspected post offices at home and abroad whilst working for the British postal service, Trollope continued this habit during his personal trips overseas (Super, p.286). His visit to the Post Office in Cape Town forms the subject of the first of the three episodes from *South Africa* that this thesis analyses. Trollope prefaces his description of the Post Office in Cape Town with the following statement:

Wherever I go I visit the post-office, feeling certain that I may be able to give a little good advice. Having looked after post-offices for thirty years at home I fancy that I could do very good service among the Colonies if I could have arbitrary power given to me to make what changes I pleased (*South Africa*, p.83).

Trollope's wish to exercise dictatorial control over the functioning of the colonial postal service is perhaps reflective of a wider imperial impulse to consolidate British power in the Cape Colony, through the network of the colonial postal service. His experience as a postal inspector and his implied metropolitan superiority gives him the authority to criticise the Cape's postal practices:

I did not therefore say much at Cape Town; – but I thought it would have been well if they had not driven the public to buy stamps at a store opposite, seeing that as the Colony pays salaries the persons taking the salaries ought to do the work; – and that it would be well also if they could bring themselves to cease to look at the public as enemies from whom it is necessary that the officials inside should be protected by fortifications in the shape of barred windows and closed walls. Bankers do their work over open counters, knowing that no one would deal with them were they to shut their desks up behind barricades (p.83).

²⁸⁸ Anthony Trollope, *North America*, 2 vols (London: Chapman and Hall, 1862), I, p. 230.

The interpersonal contact which is necessary to keep the postal service running in South Africa has been restricted by the General Post Office, whose inappropriate fortifications and barricades are excessive in the context of Cape Town's urban setting.

Although he was critical of the General Post Office in Cape Town, Trollope praised the overall system, commending the punctuality and regularity of the Colony's deliveries, which were performed under very difficult circumstances. A combination of bad roads, long distances and 'rough' mail carts conspired to make the work of a colonial postman very challenging (*South Africa*, pp.83-84). This focus on bad roads and long distances is reminiscent of Trollope's descriptions of his journeys in *The West Indies and the Spanish Main* (1859).²⁸⁹ At the outset of his trip, the bad roads in Jamaica were a source of 'additional excitement' to the tourist. However, by the end of his time on the island, Trollope identified them as one of the causes of Jamaica's economic depression, because they hindered the transportation of produce (p.26 and p.47). Similarly, in Trinidad, Trollope lamented the colony's rudimentary road system, which hampered a proper survey of the island and prevented it from becoming more developed (p.226). Trollope thus frames his encounters with the West Indian colonies through a focus on the systems and infrastructure which could either make their fortunes, or lead to their destruction.

In South Africa, Trollope again focussed on the Colony's infrastructure and transport network. In the Cape, he commended the feats of engineering which had made the numerous mountain passes in the area possible, and commented on the skill and financial investment needed to construct these roads (*South Africa*, p.118). However, as soon as he left the more developed Cape Colony to explore South Africa's interior, Trollope encountered the hazards of South African travel, which came not from the wild animals nor the aggressions of the indigenous population, but rather from 'the length, the roughness and the dustiness of roads' (p.139). Just as bad roads hindered trade in Jamaica, Trollope noted that the coal fields in Natal were made commercially unviable due to the roughness of the roads and the huge distances that the coal had to be transported in order to trade it (p.222). Trollope's consideration of the practical and natural hazards associated with making a colony

²⁸⁹ Anthony Trollope, *The West Indies and the Spanish Main*, (London: Chapman and Hall, 1859).

economically successful therefore identify the need for a strong infrastructure and a belief that nature needs to conform to the colonial bureaucratic vision. The place should befit the system and be a suitable host for efficient British systems and infrastructure.

In addition to facilitating the delivery of mail and produce across the colonies of South Africa, the roads were also integral to the militarisation of the region by facilitating the transportation of troops.²⁹⁰ The link between the modernisation of infrastructure, the development of roads, and the militarisation of cities is an idea that would have been familiar to those of Trollope's readers who were aware of the renovation of Paris, which took place between 1853 and 1870. At Napoleon's direction, George-Eugène Haussmann redeveloped the city, replacing its overcrowded medieval neighbourhoods and winding streets with wide boulevards and well-ordered public spaces. Rumour had it that the city's new layout was designed to create urban defences against riots and revolutions – the wide boulevards made barricades obsolete, and would have allowed the French army and cavalry easy access to the city.²⁹¹ Emile Zola commented upon the controversy in his novel *La Curée* (1872), describing the renovations as:

[...] Paris slashed with sabre cuts, its veins opened, providing a living for a hundred thousand navvies and bricklayers, traversed by splendid military roads which will bring the forts into the heart of old neighbourhoods.²⁹²

Trollope had read *La Curée*, and so it is possible that his interest in the work being undertaken to modernise South Africa's roads was influenced by this argument (*Trollope Letters*, II, p.63). After all, as Trollope noted in the first chapter of *South Africa*, Shepstone had 'walked' unhindered into the Transvaal and annexed it, presumably aided by the increasingly developed nature of South Africa's infrastructure – town roads were slowly becoming macadamised, even if the rural roads remained relatively under-developed (*South Africa*, p.206). Building roads to facilitate the movement of troops in South Africa's highly fraught military context suggests that this particular action of settlement and

²⁹⁰ The link between roads and the militarisation of South Africa has a long history. More recently, urban legend has it that the motorway that forms a ring road around Johannesburg was built of concrete to assist the mobilisation of the South African Army during the apartheid era. I have been unable to find solid evidence for this, however.

²⁹¹ Colin Jones, *Paris: Biography of a City*, (London; New York: Penguin, 2006), pp. 344 - 369.

²⁹² Emile Zola, *The Kill (La Curée)*, ed. by Brian Nelson, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, [1871 - 1872] 2004), p. 69.

colonisation is conversely based on feelings of instability and insecurity, and the precariousness of the settler experience is once again expressed in the very behaviours which are intended to express belonging.

Road-based travel in South Africa raised a second concern for Trollope-the-traveller – the unsophisticated vehicles used to traverse them. On being shown the type of mail cart which was to be his main mode of transport across the Colony, Trollope's 'spirit groaned' at the basic appearance of the vehicles, which later turned into 'external groanings' once he actually started using them (*South Africa*, pp.83 – 84). In another letter to Henry, Trollope admitted that he was dreading journeying by post cart, worrying that he and his fellow passengers would be travelling extremely long distances at a stretch, with only a few hours overnight before the journey resumed the following day (*Trollope Letters*, II, p.734). At the age of sixty one and weighing in at 16 stones, Trollope must have been anticipating extreme physical discomfort, and his concerns about the mail carts were exacerbated after numerous colonists warned him of the dangers associated with the journey inland.²⁹³ The mail carts were notorious, as a number of pieces published in the *Cape Monthly Magazine* testify. In January 1862, the following description of travelling by mail cart was published:

It is a sort of rough, strong dog-cart, in many instances provided with springs, drawn by a pair of horses and driven by a half-caste Hottentot, who is changed at every stage with the horses, which are under his care. Three passengers are accommodated *dos-à-dos*, the letter-bags are stowed inside, and in this manner it is not unusual to make a journey of five or six hundred miles at a stretch, with only occasional halts of a quarter of an hour. The rate of travelling, including stoppages, is about ten miles an hour. On you go, at a jerking gallop which is seldom altered to any other pace, hour after hour, through daylight and dark, toiling up the rises, plunging down the descents, 'springing them' over the flats – a restless moving speck on the wide, still landscape.²⁹⁴

The vast South African landscape dwarfs the small mail cart, which nevertheless, continues on its way 'merrily' in a poem published in 1874:

Rumbling, rattling, shaking, jolting,
Galloping, kicking, plunging, bolting,
Driver giving eternal "colting",
To horses 'neath th' infliction moulting,
So merrily goes the post-cart.
[...]

²⁹³ Graham Handley, 'Introduction', in *Trollope the Traveller: Selections from Anthony Trollope's Travel Writings*, ed. by Graham Handley, (London: William Pickering, 1993), pp. xv - xxxiii (p. xxx).

²⁹⁴ 'The Post Cart', *Cape Monthly Magazine*, January 1862, pp. 20 - 25 (p. 21).

Through the rivers, across the sluits,
Over the mountains and into the spruits,
As fast as can drag it the half-fed brutes,
Away like a flash of lightning it shoots,
So merrily goes the post-cart [...] ²⁹⁵

Both of these descriptions emphasise the relentless galloping pace of the mail carts over the rough roads, and juxtapose their jolting and frenzied movement against the empty stillness of the natural landscape.

Trollope's route, from the Cape to Natal, then north to Pretoria before travelling to Kimberley to see the diamond mines, and then heading south again to Bloemfontein, and back to the Cape Colony was estimated to be a total distance of 1500 miles. He had three choices. If he purchased his own cart he would be more comfortable but would run the risk of making a financial loss on its sale when he returned to Cape Town. If he chose to travel by public conveyance he would have the company of fellow passengers, but the cabs only travelled once a week and were frequently overbooked. They also limited the amount of luggage that passengers could take to 'a toothbrush and a clean shirt'. Trollope's only other option was to use the mail carts, which despite the unsophistication of the vehicles and the slow travelling times, departed more frequently and allowed passengers to carry more baggage (*South Africa*, p.246). Despite his misgivings about the discomforts of the mail carts, Trollope's anxiety was somewhat alleviated by his confidence in their reliability, as he wrote that 'It is very rough, – very rough indeed for old bones. But it is sure' (p.84). Regardless of the roughness of the South African system, its vehicles are still to be admired for the dogged 'sureness' with which they overcame all obstacles.

In addition to his grudging admiration for the mail carts, Trollope was also pleased with the 'coloured' drivers of the vehicles. One in particular, the aptly-named Apollo, made a lasting impression on Trollope, who described his skilled horsemanship thus:

²⁹⁵ Alfred W. Cole, 'The Lay of the Post-Cart', reprinted in 'Colonial Roads, Routes and Modes of Travel', in *Selected Articles from the Cape Monthly Magazine (New Series 1870 - 1876)*, ed. by A. M. Lewin Robinson, (Cape Town: Van Riebeeck Society, [1874] 1978), pp. 214 -227 (p. 226). In his memoir, Cole claims that this poem struck a chord with the colonists, and it was published in almost every newspaper in the colony (Cole, *Reminiscences*, p.120).

I sometimes flatter myself that I know something about the driving of ill-sorted teams, having had much to do for many years with the transmission of mails at home, and I do not know that I ever saw a more skilful man with awkward horses than was this Cape driver (*South Africa*, p.209).

Apollo was Trollope's diver from Durban to Pietermaritzburg, and he had to contend with a full load of passengers, their luggage, and his mail bags. He also had to resolve passenger disputes, one of which Trollope recounted in great detail (pp.209 – 210). The passenger who caused this particular disturbance arrived at a collection point along the route with a huge 45-pound fish in his arms which he claimed was luggage. When he was told that he was not allowed to bring the fish on the mail cart, the passenger attempted to force his way into the front of the coach, near the box where Trollope was sitting. Trollope immediately told the man that if he sat there, the fish would be ejected from the coach. This escalated the confrontation, as the fish-carrying man then threatened to pull Trollope off the coach. At this point Apollo took rash action, spurring the horses on in an attempt to leave the angry passenger behind. The passenger however, 'with more than colonial alacrity, and with courage worthy of a better cause' managed to jump up on the back of the coach and find a seat, still carrying his fish (p.210). The situation thereafter seemed to resolve itself. Despite the unpleasant smell issuing from the fish, the other passengers made room in the carriage for the opportunistic colonist and his fish, and Trollope reluctantly admitted his admiration for the tenacity that the man displayed (p.211).

In this instance, contact between people within the postal network produces comical results. On the surface, it appears that colonial alacrity, improvisation, and a complete lack of propriety solved the problem of the man and his massive fish more efficiently than Trollope's favoured method of bureaucratic control and order. His respect for his inappropriate fellow passenger's display of distinctly un-Trollopian behaviour suggests that to be a successful colonist one must combine a respect for British systems and order with a good measure of colonial daring and pluck. However, the humour of the incident is undermined by the physical threats posed by the 'angry' and 'frantic' colonist who threatened to unseat Trollope, forced his way onto the coach, and discomforted his fellow passengers by placing his smelly fish in the foot well of the carriage (p.210). As soon as the system breaks down, the interpersonal interactions which are necessary to support the running of the postal service reveal the tensions and power struggles at play amongst the colonists.

The type of creativeness and improvisation the colonist above displayed in resolving his conundrum by force also suggests that the postal network can be opened up to corruption and abuse. The third and final incident I consider in this chapter illustrates the dangers of departing from Government-approved systems of order and control. Describing the journey from Pietermaritzburg to Newcastle, Trollope explains that the mail cart to Newcastle only ran once a week, as Zulu runners took all other mail twice a week on foot. The cart therefore transported heavier and bulkier mail items such as magazines, newspapers and books. On this particular instance, Trollope noticed that one of the parcels being loaded into the mail cart was a large tin box covered in canvas which had been sealed, in contravention of the usual postal rules.²⁹⁶ When he asked the assistant post-master about it, Trollope was informed that the box contained bonnets but was being transported at the lower-priced 'book-parcel rate of postage'. The 'injustice' of a sealed box being knowingly sent to its destination at the incorrect postage rate caused feelings of 'horror' to Trollope's 'official mind' (*South Africa*, p.248). Presumably this incident reminded Trollope of his experience as a rural postal inspector in the 1850's, when he had to correct the 'evil' practice that the local delivery men had begun of extorting an extra penny per letter from recipients who lived off their usual beat. Trollope viewed this as a 'sin' that had to be 'stamped out' (Trollope, *Autobiography*, I, p.120). Finding that the postal delivery laws of South Africa were being similarly abused, Trollope began to 'prepare [...] for battle' when it was suggested that the tin containing the bonnets should be carried in the passenger compartment (*South Africa*, p.248). However, at the time of departure the weather was fine, and so the tin was fastened to the back of the mail cart, where Trollope promptly forgot about it. Once out of sight, the offending parcel, and the lapse in propriety that it represented, was no longer a threat to Trollope's bureaucratically-inclined mind.

On the second morning of the journey to Newcastle, rain threatened. The mail cart driver therefore proposed that the mail bags should be moved inside, onto the floor of the passenger compartment, and that the passengers should sit with their feet in each other's laps. Trollope

²⁹⁶ The rules published in the Post Office Guide state that parcels 'must be open for inspection'... 'either entirely open or in wrappers open at the ends'. ('The Post Office Guide, Containing Full Information Respecting the Postal and Telegraph Services of the Cape Colony', (Cape Town, 1891), (p. 19).).

immediately declared that the tin box, with its sharp edges, should not come inside the compartment, apparently viewing it as a bigger imposition than sitting with another passenger's feet in his lap! An altercation with the driver ensued:

"It can't come here," said I. "It must," said the driver surlily. "But it won't," said I decidedly. "But it will," said the driver angrily. I bethought myself a moment and then declared my purpose of not leaving the vehicle, though I knew that breakfast was prepared within. "May I trouble you to bring a cup of tea to me here," I said to one of my fellow victims. "I shall remain and not allow the tin box to enter the cart." "Not allow!" said the custodian of the mails. "Certainly not," said I, with what authority I could command. "It is illegal." The man paused for a moment awed by the word and then entered upon a compromise, "would I permit the mail bags to be put inside, if the tin box were kept outside?" To this I assented, and so the cart was packed (*South Africa*, p.248).

This episode again reveals how difficult Trollope found it to leave his professional habits behind him. Just as he had involved himself in the incident with the enormous fish, Trollope situated himself as the arbiter of the rule of law and proper behaviour. In this instance, his horror at the abuse of the postal system by the sender of the parcel, the assistant post-master, and the driver of the mail cart triggered Trollope's latent inner superintendent, and he could not allow this transgression to occur. That being said, in an overseas territory he was open to compromise, and just as he had accepted the man with the fish, Trollope also accepted the box, provided it stayed outside the compartment. The illegality that it represented, and the risk to the efficient functioning of the postal service that the parcel threatened, seem to be negated in a colonial context by removing the offending item from view.

These three incidents all reveal the presence of colonial dysfunction and eccentricity, and contain bizarre elements which indicate Trollope's preoccupation with decorum and propriety. They also suggest that Trollope is concerned with the effects of colonialism on the body. The physicality and smell of the 45-pound fish, and the fact that it occupied the carriage's foot well, forcing passengers to sit with their legs dangling outside the coach, suggests that the hierarchy of animals and humans has been inverted. The final episode, in which the passengers were asked to sit with their feet in each other's laps, continues this motif of colonial bodies coming under assault from the ramshackle implementation of metropolitan systems in South Africa. All three episodes also hinge on contact and interactions between the individuals using the network. They reveal that when South African colonial systems are put under stress, interpersonal interactions become conflict-ridden and characterised by the exercise of power and force.

Nevertheless, Trollope's humorous and self-deprecating manner of narration lightens the tone of the book, and makes the incidents charming vignettes of the challenges associated with colonial travel and settlement. By incorporating these novelistic episodes into his travel narrative, Trollope turns what could have been quite a dry, factual account of journeys between small colonial towns into flashpoints of interest. The episodic and eccentric nature of Trollope's writing in these incidents makes it challenging to tease out the register of Trollope's writing, particularly because they are so highly dramatized. The dialogic recounting of his confrontation with the mail driver over the box of bonnets is novelistic in style and reads humorously, as if Trollope were deliberately 'hamming' the incident up for comic effect. Trollope further destabilises these incidents by recounting a lot of the dialogue in *South Africa* in his own words, translating any non-English words for his readers. Thus an encounter with a Dutch grape farmer is presented as follows:

'The owner was among the vines when we arrived, and as he walked up to us in the broad place in front of his house, he informed us that he was "jolly old". This he said in Dutch' (*South Africa*, p.117).

The generic hybridity and porousness of travel writing is well-established, and most critical reviews point this out in their introductions.²⁹⁷ Johannes Fabian's ethnographic examination of travel and exploration narratives in Central Africa between 1878 and 1914 demonstrates how these accounts became 'permeable to fantasy and fiction'.²⁹⁸ He argues that explorers' encounters with indigenous people in Central Africa were often influenced by the travellers' feelings of 'extreme fatigue, fear, delusions of grandeur, and feelings ranging from anger to contempt' which caused them to recount some of their experiences as delirious inventions (Fabian, p.3). Of course, Trollope was not exploring South Africa, but taking a tour on an already well-established 'inspection' circuit. Nevertheless, the generic instability of travel writing, and the mixture of fiction, fact, and bureaucratic reporting styles that Trollope uses has the potential to undermine his reliability as a narrator.

²⁹⁷ See for example, Paul Smethurst, 'Introduction', in *Travel Writing, Form, and Empire: The Poetics and Politics of Mobility*, ed. by Julia Kuehn and Paul Smethurst, (London: Routledge, 2009), pp. 1 - 19 (p. 4).

²⁹⁸ Johannes Fabian, *Out of Our Minds: Reason and Madness in the Exploration of Central Africa*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000), p. 241.

Ian Henderson has recently observed that Trollope's travel writing brought together 'the civil servant, the novelist, and the patron/father in the persona of an exemplary gentleman professional, a tourist-inspector [...]' (Henderson, p.7). Trollope's paternal credentials were further augmented by the extensive preparation that he did prior to his trip to the Cape. In the Introduction to *South Africa*, Trollope listed some of his contemporaneous sources which included John Noble's *South Africa: Past and Present* (1877); George M. Theale's *Compendium of South African History and Geography* (1877); a copy of a lecture delivered by Donald Currie at the Royal Colonial Institute in June 1877, as well as various 'almanacks, pamphlets, lectures, letters and blue books to a very great number indeed' (*South Africa*, pp.35 – 36). By synthesising the information from this large range of sources, which included contributions by local Capetonian authors, Trollope created the most up-to-date and authoritative text on South Africa available at that time.

Trollope's earlier travel book, *Australia and New Zealand* featured a similar amount of orderly research, preparation and planning. Henderson argues that this may have contributed to the book's dullness and lack of flair in comparison to the vivacity of *The West Indies and the Spanish Main*, for which Trollope had not done any preparation, and which was written whilst he travelled (Henderson, p.6). Trollope's approach to writing *South Africa* was a combination of his two previous approaches – his tactic of travelling 'with running pen, and running feet, too' was backed up by extensive prior research (*Trollope Letters*, II, p.747).²⁹⁹ However, just as the colonial improvisations that I identified in the previous section had the potential to challenge the integrity of the postal system, Trollope's impressionistic, sketch-based mode of writing had the potential to destabilise *South Africa's* accuracy and the realism of his representations. Indeed, as the previous chapter has shown, the press in the Cape Colony were quick to point out Trollope's factual errors and misinterpretations.

Tanya Agathocleous notes that Trollope's travel writing conforms to the literary tradition of the verbal sketch – a writing technique which uses brief encounters or vignettes to give readers the

²⁹⁹ Indeed, in addition to writing whilst travelling, Trollope was also published while travelling, as some of his letters to the publisher Trübner (which were intended for newspaper publication upon his return) were printed whilst he was still in South Africa. This caused much embarrassment, owing to Trollope's frank and at times unflattering descriptions of the colony and its people (Davidson, 'Introduction', p.12).

main facts without going into too much detail.³⁰⁰ Certainly this can be seen in the episodic nature of the incidents that were considered in this section. Agathocleous argues that Trollope and his fellow travel writers used this technique in order to bring ‘the uncharted expanses of empire to the doorstep of less leisured or adventurous readers’ (Agathocleous, p.75 and p.83). They did this by capturing ‘[...] people and places with scientific accuracy, arresting the seeming chaos of time in the process’ (Agathocleous, p.85). The verbal sketch has its origins in the British Romanticism of the nineteenth century, and is ideologically linked to the artistic or visual sketch.³⁰¹ Both forms of the sketch attempt to convince audiences that ‘less finish, less labour, and less fastidiousness to form is more aesthetic, more truthful [...]’ (Sha, p.1). Trollope indexes this in the conclusion to *South Africa*, in which he defends his writing style:

It will be brought against me as an accusation that I have made my enquiries and have written my book in a hurry. It has been done hurriedly. Day by day as I have travelled about the continent in the direction indicated in its pages I have written my book. The things which I have seen have been described within a few hours of my seeing them. The words that I have heard have been made available for what they were worth, — as far as it was within my power to do so, — before they were forgotten. A book so written must often be inaccurate; but it may possibly have something in it of freshness to atone for its inaccuracies (*South Africa*, p.453).

Trollope here prioritises ‘freshness’, namely the energy and excitement of his narrative thread, over factual accuracy.

Trollope’s defensiveness, and his emphasis on the speed and resulting faithfulness of his representations registers the Romantic era’s concern to educate audiences to read through the sketch’s roughness in order to understand the visionary work contained within the artist’s spontaneous responses to the world around him (Sha, pp.2 – 7). Trollope writes:

There are two kinds of confidence which a reader may have in his author [...]. There is a confidence in facts and a confidence in vision. The one man tells you accurately what has been. The other suggests to you what may, or perhaps what must have been, or what ought to have been. The former requires simple faith. The latter calls upon you to judge for yourself, and form your own conclusions. The former does not pretend to be prescient, nor the latter accurate. Research is the weapon used by the former; observation by the latter. Either may be false,—wilfully false; as also may either be steadfastly true. As to that the reader must judge for himself. But the man who writes *currente calamo*, who works with a rapidity which will not admit of accuracy, may be true, and in one sense as trustworthy, as he who bases every word upon a rock of facts. I have written very much as I

³⁰⁰ Tanya Agathocleous, *Urban Realism and the Cosmopolitan Imagination in the Nineteenth Century: Visible City, Invisible World*, (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011), p. 74 and 83.

³⁰¹ Richard C. Sha, *The Visual and Verbal Sketch in British Romanticism*, (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1998).

have travelled about; and though I have been very inaccurate, I have always written the exact truth as I saw it;—and I have, I think, drawn my pictures correctly (*Autobiography*, 1, pp.174-175).

The distinction Trollope draws between the literature based on statistical research and literature based on impressions taps in to Wordsworth's comparison between how the poet and the 'Man of Science' approach 'truth':

The man of science seeks truth as a remote and unknown benefactor; he cherishes and loves it in his solitude: the Poet, singing a song in which all human beings join with him, rejoices in the presence of truth as our visible friend and hourly companion. Poetry is the breath and finer spirit of all knowledge: it is the impassioned expression which is in the countenance of all Science.³⁰²

Thomas de Quincey elaborated upon this distinction in his review of Alexander Pope's work in 1848, in which he wrote:

In that great social organ, which collectively we call literature, there may be distinguished two separate offices that may blend and often *do* so [...] There is first the literature of *knowledge*, and secondly, the literature of *power*. The function of the first is to *teach*; the function of the second is to *move* [...].³⁰³

The sketch is powerful because it is emotionally moving and affectively true, whereas the literature of knowledge is merely the literature of statistical verification. By situating his own work within Romantic economies of knowledge, Trollope reworks his literary status from an overly-productive report-writing civil servant into a visionary, capable of conveying philosophical truths to his readers.

The vignettes of the post office, the fish and the box of bonnets indicate that for Trollope, success in the settlement colonies requires the traveller or emigrant to be flexible and temper a British sense of order and systematic control with colonial improvisation and a willingness to bend the rules. Whilst imported British systems and networks are necessary to lay the foundations of a well-ordered, commercially successful colony, the two incidents on the mail carts reveal just how fragile these connective networks were in South Africa. They were open to abuse from customers with illegal luggage, and from the staff who were meant to be maintaining the system. Whilst Trollope seems willing to accept some colonial improvisation with regard to resolving the difficulties that he identified, there is always the unsettling suggestion that these little infractions open the system up to

³⁰² William Wordsworth, "'Preface" to *Lyrical Ballads* (1802)', in *Romantic Writings: An Anthology*, ed. by W.R. Owens and Hamish Johnson, (Milton Keynes: Open University Press, 2006), pp. 82 - 101 (p. 91).

³⁰³ Thomas De Quincey, 'The Works of Alexander Pope, Esquire', *The North British review*, 9. 18 (1848), pp. 299-333 (p. 301).

more flagrant abuse, and create the opportunity for more serious illegalities and corruption to occur. As Mark Turner has argued, so much of Trollope's fiction relies on these little gaps, inconsistencies and improprieties, as they reveal:

[...] the tenuous nature of connectedness, the difficulty of movement in our global world, in which not all routes work 'like clockwork', in which the British abroad are alone, isolated, imperilled, and caught in the gaps, between the nodes on the network (Turner, 'Global Trollope?', p.10).

The imperial project in South Africa, as expressed through the functions of the post office was therefore a fragile undertaking, reliant both on a compliant indigenous population and an honest and efficient colonial workforce.

Ann Laura Stoler's ethnography of the colonial archive suggests that while Dutch colonial administrations were concerned with generating social categories and taxonomies, the 'unsure and hesitant sorts of documentation and sensibilities that gathered around them' offer the researcher a more revealing insight into the uncertain nature of colonial rule.³⁰⁴ Stoler's conceptualisation of the 'epistemic uncertainties [...] that] unsettled the imperial conceit that all was in order' is equally applicable to the context of the post office in South Africa (Stoler, p.1). Just as the absences that Stoler identifies in official documents reveal the creative liberties that civil servants took with their records, the gaps in the postal system that Trollope recognises unveil the freedoms that the colonists took with their imported British systems and structures (Stoler, p.186). The lapses and inconsistencies that Trollope uncovers in the mail delivery system in South Africa also suggest that imperial control over the colony was tenuous. The feelings of unsettlement and ambivalence that this creates in Trollope's text also suggests that white belonging in South Africa, as articulated through the operations of the postal service, appears to have been unstable and in a state of flux.

The risks to the system that these gaps have exposed, and the rituals undertaken to try and maintain the locality produced by the mail service will be explored in later sections of this chapter and thesis. However, for the moment I want to focus on the characteristics that Trollope attributed to a successful British colony, to tease out exactly what was put at risk by colonial impropriety in South

³⁰⁴ Ann Laura Stoler, *Along the Archival Grain: Epistemic Anxieties and Colonial Common Sense*, (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2009), p. 1.

Africa. Saul Dubow calls *South Africa* a 'national audit of a country in the making', suggesting Trollope's investigatory approach to his research, but also implying South Africa's emerging sense of nationhood and maturity (*Commonwealth*, p.134). As the next section will demonstrate, the evolution of colonial maturity was something that Trollope looked forward to, but in South Africa he was unsure whether this was achievable. Rather than being a 'true colony' in the Trollopian sense of the word, South Africa was and would remain 'a country of black men' (*South Africa*, p.454).

'True' colonies and the authority of the 'tourist-inspector'

The text of *South Africa* is littered with comparisons with the other settlement colonies that Trollope had previously visited. Readers are told that Cape Town's Library was more expensive to subscribe to than Boston's; that the Botanical Gardens were not as pretty as Sydney's and that the Government House was not as big as Melbourne's (*South Africa*, pp.81-82). The formulaic structure of Trollope's travel writings, and his orderly and structured progression through the colonies would have assisted his readers to make these comparisons themselves. As Coral Lansbury notes, Trollope transposed the quasi-legal style of writing Post Office reports on to his novels and travel writings.³⁰⁵ Thus all of the travel books contain descriptions of local architecture, accounts of his 'inspections' of the relevant civic institutions, and reports of meeting eminent local personalities.

Readers of *South Africa* who were familiar with Trollope's travel writing oeuvre would therefore have found his disappointment with his first view of Table Bay reinforced by the enthusiasm with which he had described Sydney's harbour four years previously in *Australia and New Zealand* (1873). In contrast to his disappointment with Cape Town's foggy harbour, Trollope's view of Sydney Harbour had been 'inexpressibly lovely' and 'deliciously beautiful'.³⁰⁶ Likewise, while Cape Town's Company Gardens were unattractive and poorly arranged, Sydney's sea-facing Botanical Gardens had been 'impossible not to love' (*South Africa*, p.82; *Australia*, I, p.212). Melbourne, too, is described much

³⁰⁵ Coral Lansbury, *The Reasonable Man: Trollope's Legal Fiction*, (Princeton, N.J: Princeton University Press, 1981).

³⁰⁶ Anthony Trollope, *Australia and New Zealand*, 2 vols (London: Chapman and Hall, 1873), I, pp. 207 - 211.

more enthusiastically than Cape Town – in comparison to the Cape’s ragged roads and uneven pavements, Melbourne’s wide streets gave the city an air of ‘grandeur’ and magnificence (*South Africa*, p.77; *Australia*, I, p.387). Once again, Trollope organises his travel narrative around an assessment of the infrastructure and civic institutions of his host countries, framing his encounters with British colonial cities abroad within an account of the structures that indicated colonial maturity and development. White settlement in South Africa, which should be represented through its civic institutions, is disappointingly unsettled and under developed.

One of Cape Town’s civic institutions that bore the brunt of Trollope’s critical investigation was the South African Public Library. Trollope observes the same issues and failings that the members of the South African Public Library had also identified, namely, its empty reading room, high subscription rate and eclectic collection (*South Africa*, p.81). The Library also fares poorly in comparison to Trollope’s encounters with similar colonial libraries. Melbourne’s library had received praise for its administrative efficiency and free entry for reference users, while Boston’s library was commended for its large collection, pretty and enthusiastic librarians, well-organised system of loans and fines, and the pleasing fact that Trollope’s ‘own productions were in enormous demand’ (*Australia*, 1, p.390, *North America*, 1, p.360 and p.390). Trollope’s systematic approach to sightseeing and writing is again demonstrative of how he applied his professional habits as a postal inspector to his personal life. It also reveals his preference for civic institutions to display bureaucratic efficiency. Gardens should be pretty and well-organised, towns ought to be attractive and well-run, and libraries should be accessible to all and, most importantly, should stock his books. Cape Town’s rough, muddy streets, expensive library full of literary curiosities and ill-stocked botanical garden therefore compared unfavourably to the metropole, as well as to some of the other better-developed colonies in the British Empire that Trollope had visited. These lateral comparisons between Britain’s colonies of settlement allowed Trollope to calibrate their relative advancements, and reinforced his authority as a well-travelled commentator.

South Africa’s slower development in comparison to the other British settlement colonies that Trollope had visited made the importation of metropolitan systems vitally important. Trollope partly attributed this unsophistication to the Cape’s Dutch heritage and the diminutive size of the English-

speaking population. He estimated that the English population in the South African colonies numbered up to 120,000 in comparison to 220,000 Dutch people, and found this figure troubling since South Africa had 'belonged to England' for over eighty years (*South Africa*, p.70). Another reason for South Africa's retrograde state of affairs becomes apparent when looking at the population in general:

A walk through the streets of Capetown [sic] is sufficient to show the stranger that he has reached a place not inhabited by white men, — and a very little conversation will show him further that he is not speaking with an English-speaking population. The gentry no doubt are white and speak English. At any rate the members of Parliament do so, and the clergymen, and the editors — for the most part, and the good-looking young ladies; — but they are not the population. He will find that everything about him is done by coloured persons of various races [...] (p.78).

Trollope's construction of 'whiteness' here is aligned to Englishness, which he makes explicit in this reference to the characteristics that he considers attributable to a British colony:

Where Englishmen, — or white men whether they be of English or other descent, — have gone to labour and have thus raised a community in a distant land under the British flag [...]' (p.89)

Englishness in the colonies of South Africa thus becomes a broad classification, capable of subsuming non-English white Europeans into the category, provided they accept and encourage British sovereignty.

However, whilst the urban Dutch may have been becoming increasingly culturally Anglicised, the rural Dutch, or Boers, steadfastly attempted to avoid incorporation into the British Empire. Their favoured avoidance tactic was the 'trek', which Trollope defined as moving away from government control into 'further districts in which they might live a free though hard life' (*South Africa*, p.47). James Buzard argues that by behaving in such a manner, the Dutch Boers performed the same role as the 'squatters' in *Australia and New Zealand* — 'they opened up the land' but were 'an impediment to its continued development'.³⁰⁷ The Boers's numerous treks away from British rule made the interior of South Africa more accessible, but they obstructed the development of these new lands due to their preference for 'enormous' 6000 acre farms which they were unable to fully develop:

That great colonial quidnunc and speculator in colonial matters, Gibbon Wakefield, enunciated one great truth when he declared that all land in new countries should be sold to the new comers at a

³⁰⁷ James Buzard, 'Trollope and Travel', in *The Cambridge Companion to Anthony Trollope*, ed. by Carolyn Dever and Lisa Niles, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), pp. 168-180 (p. 178).

price. By this he meant that let the price be what it might land should not be given away, but should be parted with in such a manner as to induce in the mind of the incoming proprietor a feeling that he had paid for it its proper price, and that he should value the land accordingly (*South Africa*, p.322).

Trollope here ignores Wakefield's thesis that colonial success is dependent on concentrated levels of labour, in order to focus on the land's lack of productivity.³⁰⁸ It is:

[...] locked up and unused [...] Therefore it is that the produce is small, that the roads are desolate, and that the country to the eye of the traveller appears like a neglected wilderness (p.323).

The economic development of South Africa therefore demanded not only a developed infrastructure as identified in the previous section, but also the subdivision and redistribution of the large Boer farms in the region, which had recently come under British rule after the annexation of the Transvaal. Again citing the Australian procedures for the purchase of new land, Trollope advocated making the sale of smaller parcels of land profitable to the Boers to encourage their cooperation and turn South Africa into a utopian 'land of milk and honey' rather than a desolate wasteland (p.321 – 323). South Africa's limitations as a settlement colony for British emigrants could thus be mitigated by improved land distribution amongst the white settlers.

Despite his criticisms of the Boers' land management, Trollope was favourably impressed with their hospitality and manners. He argued that English people had the 'wrong impression' about them, writing:

It has been imagined by some people, — I must acknowledge to have received such an impression myself, — that the Boer was a European who had retrograded from civilization, and had become savage, barbarous, and unkindly. There can be no greater mistake. The courtesies of life are as dear to him as to any European. The circumstances of his secluded life have made him unprogressive. It may, however, be that the same circumstances have maintained with him that hospitality for strangers and easy unobtrusive familiarity of manners, which the contests and rapidity of modern life have banished from us in Europe. The Dutch Boer, with all his roughness, is a gentleman in his manners from his head to his heels (*South Africa*, p.452).

The Boers are primitive and anachronistic, and this gives them an unexpected charm. The aesthetic link that Trollope makes between the Boers' geographical isolation and their societal regression suggests that he views progress and civilisation as inherently metropolitan. By remaining in their

³⁰⁸ In letter LXVIII of his *View of the Art of Colonisation*, Wakefield argues that the large, under developed farms held by the Dutch has resulted in South Africa remaining 'poor and stagnant'. Trollope read this, as he critiques the book and its author in *Australia and New Zealand* (Edward Gibbon Wakefield, *View of the Art of Colonisation*, (London: John W. Parker, 1849), p. 434; Anthony Trollope, *Australia and New Zealand*, 2 vols (London: Chapman and Hall, 1873), II, p. 8 and p.68.).

isolated locality, their admirable, old-fashioned values have been preserved, and the Dutch Boer becomes a figure to be admired, despite the negative impact that his unproductive farming methods had on the area's economy.

The Dutch were not the only non-English community that Trollope identified as being limiting factors to British imperial expansion and settlement in South Africa. The large and diverse indigenous population also posed problems for the British settler. In one of the opening chapters of *South Africa* Trollope refers to this racial diversity, writing:

When I left England I had some notion more or less correct as to Hottentots, Bushmen, Kafirs, and Zulus. Since that my mind has gradually become permeated with Basutos, Griquas, Bechuanas, Amapondos, Swazies, Gaikas, Galekas, and various other native races [...] (*South Africa*, p.50).

According to Trollope's sources, the white population in South Africa numbered 340,000, whilst the African population was estimated to be 3,000,000 strong (p.455). Of those 3,000,000 people, Trollope calculated that that there were some 1,936,000 'coloured' people living and working in what he called 'European South Africa', by which he meant the colonised territories (p.67). This large, non-white, working class created competition for low skilled jobs in the South African colonies, which Trollope also identified as a reason for the low levels of English emigration to the Cape Colony:

The working Englishman, — and it is he who populates the new lands, — prefers a country in which he shall not have to compete with a black man or a red man (p.71).

The numerical supremacy of the African people, and the often compulsory nature of the work that they were made to engage in, resulted in a labour force that was predominantly non-white:

The work is done by black men. They plough; they reap; they herd and shear the sheep; they drive the oxen; they load the waggons; they carry the bricks; they draw the water; they hew the wood; they brush the clothes; they clean the boots; they run the posts; they make the roads; they wait at table; they cook the food; they wash the wool; they press the grapes; they kill the beef and mutton; they dig the gardens; they plaster the walls; they feed the horses; — and they find the diamonds. A South African farmer and a South African wool grower and a South African shopkeeper will all boast that South Africa is a productive country. If it be so she is productive altogether by means of black labour (p.459).

The stress of each of these phrases is on the verb, emphasising the wide ranging yet repetitive nature of the labour undertaken by the African labour force. It gives the impression that the work undertaken is relentless and unending. Imported, low skilled, yet expensive British labourers therefore had limited access to a labour market which was dominated by a superabundance of cheap African labourers.

Despite the limitations that the African work force posed to British entry into the labour market, Trollope nevertheless viewed work and labour as a long-term solution to the problem of South Africa's large and ethnically diverse indigenous population. The numerical dominance of the African people in South Africa meant that unlike the Maoris in New Zealand and the 'Indians' of North America, the indigenous people of South Africa were 'by no means included to go' (*South Africa*, p.46). As a result, Trollope postulated that the relationship between the British and the South African indigenous population should be one of paternalistic duty – to extend the benefits of British education, fair governance and protection to the people (p.456). In doing so, Trollope hoped to 'civilize' the indigenous African people, and he viewed the process of civilization as an entirely commercial one (p.458).

If a man can be taught to want, really to desire and to covet the good things of the world, then he will work for them and by working he will be civilized. If, when they are presented to his notice, he still despises them, — if when clothes and houses and regular meals and education come in his way, he will still go naked, and sleep beneath the sky, and eat grass or garbage and then starve, and remain in his ignorance though the schoolmaster be abroad, then he will be a Savage to the end of the chapter (p.235).

The main attribute separating the civilised man from the 'Savage' is a healthy appreciation for money, and the things that money can buy.

The link between commerce and 'civilising' Africa was a well-established trope in nineteenth-century missionary rhetoric. In May 1860, Bishop Samuel Wilberforce made a speech in which he argued that commerce and Christianity were interlinked, claiming that 'there is little hope of promoting commerce in Africa, unless Christianity is planted in it; and, in the next place, there is very little ground for hoping that Christianity will be able to make its proper way unless we can establish a lawful commerce in the country [...]'.³⁰⁹ Trollope however, refuted the influence of missionary work in South Africa, arguing that missionary funds and labour had done little to improve the 'conduct' or education of the indigenous people. He also doubted whether a scheme of giving 'locations' to the African people would be a success, as it encouraged people toward idleness and poor productivity (*South Africa*, p.456). However, he was opposed to the 'rod of iron' style of governing African people

³⁰⁹ Samuel Wilberforce, 'On the Universities' Mission to Central Africa, Leeds, May 25, 1860', in *Speeches on Missions*, ed. by Henry Rowley, (London: William Wells Gardner, 1874), pp. 211 - 216 (p. 213).

which Trollope felt was akin to slavery, and led to equally unproductive working practices because the workers were not motivated by the potential for monetary gain (p.457). Rather, he felt that by teaching the African people to value money, commodities and education they could be raised to the level of the white settlers and possibly even qualify for the franchise: 'I will not say but that in coming ages a Kafir may make as good a Prime Minister as Lord Beaconsfield' (p.72). Trollope is being ironic here, as he detested Benjamin Disraeli (Hall, p.353). The solution, he felt, would be to institute 'equality of law, equality of treatment' amongst all of the inhabitants of South Africa, and in doing so encourage the development of an enthusiastic work ethic amongst the African people (*South Africa*, p.458). Trollope's answer to the pre-established non-English people of all races thus depends on their adaptation to, and emulation of, British commercial practices. The Boers' unproductive farming methods needed to be updated and their land redistributed, while the African people needed to be taught to value a monthly salary in order to begin the process of self-improvement.

The previous paragraphs have shown how the success of British settlement in the colonies of South Africa was affected by commercial competition from the Africans and the Dutch Boers. White English labour was therefore seemingly redundant and white workers' opportunities for employment were limited to upper-level roles – in semi-skilled and skilled positions as farmers, shopkeepers, and bank clerks (*South Africa*, p.399). However, even settlers who had the opportunity to work alongside African labourers sometimes chose not to, as evidenced by Trollope's experience of meeting two English beggars in Montague in the Cape Colony. They refused work on the railways because it meant working "along side of niggers for only 2s. 6d., which would only supply them with grub". The beggars claimed that "real Englishmen" would not suffer the double ignominy of accepting low pay and working at the same level as the indigenous labourers, a statement that Trollope sarcastically refuted (p.128). While Australia's colonisation and settlement had been 'successful' because the marginalised indigenous work force offered little employment competition to settlers, South Africa offered only two choices to the male English settler – he either rose to a level above the common labourer or 'sinks to something below it' (p.128). The white English labour force in South Africa therefore had the potential to be equally as problematic to the economic development of South Africa as the Boers and the indigenous African people.

While Trollope viewed working for the railways a more honourable work-form for English colonists than begging, he was not as encouraging about white settlers' employment on the colonial mines. During his survey of the gold mines in Australia, Trollope wrote that the workman on the mines 'has become a gambler, – and from this time forth a gambler he will live [...]' (*Australia*, II, p.35). Likewise at the gold mines in the Transvaal, Trollope was repelled by the 'gambling energy' of the speculators who rushed to new areas after rumours of gold (*South Africa*, p.313). The link between gambling and mining is twofold, as Trollope noted at the diamond mines in Kimberley – mining itself is a risky endeavour and actually finding diamonds lead to 'much more of gambling, much more of champagne, much more of the rowdy exhilaration coming from sudden money' (p.376). He found the moral 'stain' of the greed and avarice associated with mining concerning, and the methods of extracting the diamonds, of 'grovelling' in the dirt, demeaning (pp.376 – 377). The constant search for diamonds threatened to become all-consuming, as Trollope observed that the miners were always alert for a glitter in the sand. He was particularly concerned that the family unit could become contaminated with diamond fever, as he saw miners' wives sifting sand with their fingers outside their tents and children being trained to discern 'specks' of diamonds that an adult's eyes couldn't see (p.377). As a reaction to this obsession, Trollope declares that he would rather see his own children sweeping the street corners of London than grubbing for diamonds in Kimberley. In the diamond mining network, contact between people has become superseded by contact with minerals, which is associated with moral and physical degradation.

The postal system that transported Trollope the tourist-inspector to the Diamond Fields was also implicated in the process of diamond mining, by transporting parcels of diamonds from Kimberley to Cape Town, and then onwards to their metropolitan destinations. Trollope described the process as follows:

The stones were packed in paper parcels, each parcel containing perhaps from fifty to two hundred according to their size. Then four or five of these parcels would be fitted into a paper box, — which would again be enclosed in a paper envelope. Without other safe-guard than this the parcels are registered and sent by post, to London, Paris, or Amsterdam as the case may be. By far the greater number go to London. The mails containing these diamonds then travel for six days and six nights on mail carts to Capetown [sic], — for four-fifths of the way without any guard, and very frequently with no one on the mail cart except the black boy who drives it. The cart travels day and night along desolate roads and is often many miles distant from the nearest habitation. Why the mails are not robbed I cannot tell. The diamond dealers say that the robber could not get away with his plunder, and would find no market for it were he to do so. They, however, secure themselves by some system of insurance. I cannot but think that the insurers, or underwriters, will someday find themselves

subjected to a heavy loss. A great robbery might be effected by two persons, and the goods which would be so stolen are of all property the most portable. Thieves with a capital, — and thieves in these days do have capital, — might afford to wait, and diamonds in the rough cannot be traced. I should have thought that property of such immense value would have paid for an armed escort. The gold in Australia, which is much less portable, is always accompanied by an escort (*South Africa*, p.369).

While human transportation via the mail carts was only at danger from the roughness of the roads and the improvisations of fellow passengers, Trollope viewed the transportation of diamonds as a far more risky endeavour. His fears were confirmed when a mail steamer en route from Cape Town sank. While the diamonds were successfully recovered, the parcels which contained identifying details about them were lost, and so the diamonds were stored at the General Post Office in Cape Town while the dealers attempted to decide how to return them to their rightful owners (footnote to p.369). Once again, the haphazard implementation of British imperial systems in South Africa resulted in chaos and confusion.

The dehumanising aspects of diamond mining can be seen in Trollope's first description of the Colesburg hill, where the main mine was situated. Viewing it from an elevated perspective on the top of a mound, Trollope describes the mine as 'the largest and most complete hole made by human agency' (*South Africa*, p.360). Nine acres in diameter, the vastness of the hole in the earth dwarfs the figures of the three to four thousand African miners busy working on the site like 'ants [...] with all the usual energy of the ant-tribe' (p.360 – 361). The indigenous workers are also infected with diamond-avarice, and Trollope describes how they steal diamonds from their white employers to give them to their 'Chiefs' (p.364). However, whilst Trollope seems to view the employment of white labour in the mines in a negative light, he is more positive about the influence of commerce upon the African labourers. Once again, Trollope invests work with 'civilizing' properties – the African miners are punctual, methodical, and enjoy spending their wages (p.368). Working on the mines is therefore racially coded – whilst it has the potential to lift the indigenous races, it can degrade the white workers. Trollope instead situates the white worker in a managerial role, and suggests that coal mining is a better source of employment for the white worker because as the 'head workman' he is removed from actual contact with the coal, and has more opportunity to use his intelligence for 'calculations' than he does on the diamond mine (p.377). The contaminating effects of mining can

therefore be mitigated by placing the English labourer in a managerial position, where he is able to progress his career without coming into contact with the products of mining.

At this point it is useful to once again consider the attributes which make a 'real Englishman' in the colonies. The previous sections used Trollope's admiration for the 'plucky' colonist with the fish to suggest that intelligence and quick wits were necessary to thrive in the colonies. Trollope makes this explicit after his encounter with the beggars. He states that a 'good' colonial man who is likely to succeed is one with intelligence, who avoids drink and has a good work ethic. These attributes will aid his success, and enable him to improve his position in society on a steady, if moderate, trajectory (*South Africa*, p.128). This ideal settler is reminiscent of the figure that Henderson has identified in Trollope's writing – the 'gentleman professional' (Henderson, p.2). Epitomised by Trollope himself, Henderson postulates that the gentlemanly professional could play a role in overcoming '[...] Victorian modernity's "spread and diffusion" and the threats it contained for connection and social cohesion across a British imperial globe' (p.9). The socially cohesive properties of the gentleman professional are a result of his 'slow and steady' personal development and advancement, both in Trollope's own career and in his fiction. Henderson draws on Trollope's *An Autobiography* to demonstrate that Trollope's politics, as an 'advanced conservative Liberal', made him resistant to sudden change both at an individual, and at a wider, societal level (p.9). Trollope's criticism of the diamond miners demonstrates this – he is wary of the impact that 'sudden' riches can have on the individual's equilibrium (*South Africa*, p.376). For Henderson, the gentleman professional is in the middle of the social scale, at a position which is attainable through hard work and steady progress. He argues that this middle point is also where those of the upper classes, who are interested in and involved in public service, descend to (as seen in the figure of Plantagenet Palliser who morphs from being the Duke of Omnium to Prime Minister). Social cohesion is thus furthered because both the working and the upper classes can meet at the level of the gentleman professional and work toward equality and common societal goals (Henderson, p.10). In the colonial setting, this can be seen in Trollope's preference for coal mining over gold or diamond mining. By occupying managerial positions, English labour can establish itself in a protected sector of industry and thereby

ease the effects of the large non-white labour force on their employment and establishment in the colonies.

The diminutive size of South Africa's white, English-speaking population raised questions about the usefulness of the Cape as a British settlement colony. Throughout the 1870's Trollope's description of the qualities that defined a 'true' colony had remained relatively stable (*South Africa*, p.70). In *Australia and New Zealand*, colonies were 'countries outside our own, which by our energies we have made fit for the occupation of our multiplying races' (*Australia*, I, p.2). In 1875, this definition had expanded to include not just settlement and occupation, but also the ability to earn one's living 'from the soil' and 'under the protection of the British crown'.³¹⁰ Thus by 1878, Trollope's readers would not have been surprised to read the following description of the attributes of a British colony in *South Africa*:

A British colony to the British mind is a land away from home to which the swarming multitudes of Great Britain may go and earn a comfortable sustenance, denied to them in the land of their birth by the narrowness of its limits and the greatness of its population, and may do so with the use of their own language, and in subjection to their own laws (pp.69 – 70).

The defining features of a 'true' British colony therefore include land which could be occupied and worked upon to provide an income for working class English-speaking Britons within a cultural, judicial and legal framework imported from Great Britain. The colony that Trollope is describing here is formed in the image of the mother country, a home from home, a reflection of the metropole. Colonialism and settlement is also strongly associated with Britain's 'surplus working classes', whose emigration was meant to swell the English-speaking population in the Cape and consolidate British control over the colony.

This conception of a successful colony was not an unusual one, as Anna Johnston has demonstrated in her exploration of Anglo-Saxonism in the travel writings of Charles Dilke, Sydney Smith, James Froude and Francis Galton. The tradition of identifying British colonies through ties of language and racial kinship both amongst settlers, and between settlers and the metropolitan English population, performed an important ideological strengthening of imperial ties at a time when the

³¹⁰ Anthony Trollope, *The Tireless Traveller: Twenty Letters to the Liverpool Mercury, 1875*, ed. by Bradford Allen Booth, (Berkeley, Calif.; London: University of California Press, 1978), p. 93.

empire was becoming increasingly threatened by colonial nationalism (Johnston, p.32). The conception of the Anglo-Saxon race, descended from King Alfred and comprised of Germanic or Teutonic races, had replaced the Arthurian, Celtic myth of English origins after the first Hanoverian king, George I, ascended the throne in the early eighteenth century (Young, *English Ethnicity*, p.15). According to Robert Young, the myth went that the Saxons, who had invaded England and displaced the Celts, became the 'real English' race after they were in turn conquered by the French Normans:

[...] the arrival of the Normans under William the Conqueror in 1066 [...] was widely regarded as an infringement of the true racial and cultural identity of the Saxon English. Historians identifying with the Saxons therefore drew on the thesis of 'the Norman yoke' which portrayed English history as the story of the struggle against the invaders, who were eventually successfully assimilated: the Saxons eventually conquered the conquerors (Young, *English Ethnicity*, p.19 and p.20).

In the nineteenth century, the Norman Conquest was used as a justification for, and model of, imperialism.³¹¹ There was a sense that English people in the colonies could be true Anglo-Saxons because they were no longer being oppressed by an invading Norman force. In *South Africa*, Trollope's emphasis on the binding 'ties of language and kinship' across the empire conforms to this ideological trope.³¹²

However, in South Africa the large indigenous population, the size of which Trollope emphasised repeatedly in *South Africa*, disrupts the classical and homogenised vision of an Anglo-Saxon British settler colony. Indeed, in almost all respects, South Africa failed to fulfil Trollope's requirements of a successful colony. Whilst there appeared to be enough land for extensive English occupation, it had to be forcefully taken from the indigenous population and from the Boers by the colonial 'civilised invaders' (*South Africa*, p.58). The constant threat of war and conflict with the indigenous people and the Dutch settlers, along with the pre-existence of a large non-white working class had deterred English emigration. Trollope's eugenic focus on the numerical supremacy of South Africa's indigenous population produced one of his best-known axioms about the colony:

South Africa is a country of black men, – and not of white men. It has been so; it is so; and it will continue to be so. In this respect it is altogether unlike Australia, unlike the Canadas, and unlike New Zealand (pp.454 – 455).

³¹¹ See for example Deane Williams, 'Rudyard Kipling and the Norman Conquest', *Ariel* 39. 3 (2008), pp. 107 - 123.

³¹² J. H. Davidson, 'Anthony Trollope and the Colonies', *Victorian Studies*, 12. 3 (1969), pp. 305-330 (p. 316).

The repetition of 'unlike' emphasises South Africa's difference from the other settler colonies that Trollope had visited. In this regard, South Africa's lack of potential as a settlement colony was on a par with India, which Trollope had previously dismissed as being unable to be called a colony 'as the English who live there are very few, and are confined to those who rule the real people of the land' (Trollope, *Tireless Traveller*, p.93).³¹³ In contrast to 'black' South Africa, the settlement colonies where English settlers were able to force out the indigenous population had more potential for successful colonisation. Once again, success, like 'civilisation' is a commercial achievement:

In Australia we have been successful. We are clothed with its wools. Our coffers are filled with its gold. Our brothers and our children are living there in bounteous plenty. But during the century that we have been there we have caused the entire population of a whole continent to perish. It is impossible to think of such prosperity without a dash of suffering, without a pang of remorse (*South Africa*, p.455).

Whilst this sort of 'extinction discourse' may have been applicable to the Aboriginal population in Australia, in South Africa the indigenous population had actually increased under British rule, because, according to Trollope, they no longer 'kill each other off in tribal wars' (p.71).³¹⁴ As a result, Trollope postulated that should the British abandon imperial rule in South Africa, 'the black man would return to his savagery', and possibly self-destruct (*South Africa*, p.457). White rule in South Africa was therefore necessary to further the 'civilisation' of the African people and thereby prevent their self-annihilation. Furthermore, he was confident that the white man in Africa would maintain his ascendancy, within the restraints imposed by the 'Mother Country' (p.39). He reasoned that if the African people could be governed fairly and taught the value of commerce, then Britain's 'duty' to the indigenous people would be done (p.458).

Trollope's travels in the settlement colonies prompted him to question the legitimacy of imperial expansionism. J.H Davidson argues that in the mid-1870's, Trollope was beginning to doubt the wisdom of the British Empire's aggressive expansion policy (Davidson, 'Colonies', p.329). Speaking of the Dutch seizure of the Zuurveld along the frontier of the Cape Colony in the late

³¹³ For more information regarding Trollope's attitude toward India, see Chapter Four of Lauren M. E. Goodlad, *The Victorian Geopolitical Aesthetic: Realism, Sovereignty, and Transnational Experience*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015).

³¹⁴ Patrick Brantlinger, *Dark Vanishings: Discourse on the Extinction of Primitive Races, 1800-1930*, (Ithaca, N.Y: Cornell University Press, 2003), p. 1.

eighteenth century, Trollope uses rhetorical questions to interrogate and then reaffirm the ‘necessity’ of the displacement of the indigenous people living there:

Necessity we all know has no law. But what is necessity? A man must die. A man, generally, must work or go to the wall. But need a man establish himself as a farmer on another man's land? The reader will understand that I do not deny the necessity; — but that I feel myself to be arrested when I hear it asserted as sufficient excuse (*South Africa*, p.51).

Trollope also questioned the rationale behind the annexation of the Transvaal. He likened the British treatment of the Transvaal to two boys playing, with the ‘strong’ boy taking the weaker one’s toys because “[...] it is better that I have that cricket bat than you.” (p.287). However, whilst the execution of the annexation was imperious, Trollope nevertheless felt that it had been justified (p.292). Whilst the population in the Transvaal was ‘more than half Dutch it was only less than half English’, and Trollope felt that the increase in trade and the value of land since the British occupation vindicated Shepstone’s actions in annexing the colony (p.288, pp.292 – 293). Thus although Trollope was becoming increasingly pessimistic about imperial expansionism, he was able to rationalise the annexation of the Transvaal through an emphasis on the kinship of the English race and the commercial implications of that expansion.

Trollope also questioned the success of the British colonial project in a discussion about the possible federation of the colonies of South Africa. Prior to his visit, Trollope had been in favour of federation. He thought trade amongst the South African colonies and between the colonies and Britain would be boosted by not having to pay customs duties to each other. However, on arrival in South Africa Trollope became aware that the colonists did not want confederation, and because of this he felt that it would be ‘impractical’ to force the colonies to join under one flag (*South Africa*, p.66 and p.46). Trollope was also concerned that the federation of the South African colonies would be a precursor for separation and independence from Great Britain (p.66). In the 1860’s Trollope had advocated colonial separation, however by the 1870’s he was concerned that the settlement colonies were not sufficiently mature to govern themselves successfully post-separation (Davidson, ‘Colonies’, p.329). In *South Africa*, Trollope fretted that it would be ‘[...] unwise to saddle the Colony with full parliamentary institutions before it was able to bear their weight’ (*South Africa*, p.157 – 158). In comparison to the ‘experience and foresight’ of English politicians and voters, the Cape had a weak

government, which lacked experience (*South Africa*, p.66 and p.96 and p.461). This echoes his sentiments about Australia's possible independence, in which he claimed that:

[...] the concrete wisdom of thirty million people is greater than that of a hundred and twenty thousand, and the experience of ages of legislation is needed to control the newness and rawness of a parliament that has existed but for a few years (*Australia*, I, p.155).

Just as the perfect colonist would one day be a 'gentleman professional' and work toward his own self-betterment in a steady and predictable manner, the perfect colony would work toward maturity, not jumping toward self-government before it was ready.

The text of *South Africa* that I have analysed in the last two sections of this chapter reveals that Trollope used the network of the postal system as a point of entry to grapple with his concerns about how 'good' colonialism was produced and maintained. By using the postal network to travel through the colony, Trollope was put in contact with a wide variety of colonists, and colonial settings. His answer to the question of how to implement 'good' colonialism and produce good colonists seems to revolve around commerce. A successful and useful colonist is a 'gentleman professional', progressing steadily toward his own self-betterment in a prudent and economically productive manner. A good colony is also economically productive – able to host Britain's working classes within imported British systems and modes of production. Colonial expansionism, while at times imperious, can be justified by the increase in trade and revenue that is generated when the independent states become part of the empire. In addition to helping to mould the perfect colonist, commerce also provides a solution to the problems posed to British settlers by South Africa's large indigenous population and pre-existing Dutch population. Land redistribution would make the Dutch-owned land in the Transvaal more agriculturally productive, whilst employment of any sort will 'civilise' the African people by encouraging them to begin to value British traits of punctuality, self-improvement and materialism.

'Domesticated imperialism'?

In the opening to this chapter, I pointed to Eileen Cleere's formulation of the British Post Office as an expression of 'domesticated imperialism' which carried out colonial aims 'without the oppressive

violence and tyranny that traditionally accompanied the promulgation of the British Empire' (2004, p.189). Cleere elaborates that Rowland Hill himself had anticipated this link between the British postal service and colonialism when he introduced the Penny Post in a pamphlet in 1838. In it he wrote:

There is perhaps scarcely any measure which would tend so effectually to remove the obstacles to emigration, and to maintain that sympathy between the colonies and the mother country, which is the only sure bond of connexion, as the proposed reduction in the postage of colonial letters.³¹⁵

Cheap postage between Great Britain and the colonies was therefore expected to strengthen the maternal bond between metropole and colony, and consolidate imperial control over the colonies by encouraging further emigration. In this section I will argue that while the Post Office helped to strengthen the bond between South Africa and Britain, this was certainly not the non-violent exercise of Cleere's conceptualisation. Rather, the sureness that Trollope found so reassuring in the mail cart will be found to belie the military force that supported the functioning of the imperial systems in the Cape Colony. As a result, sureness becomes a form of long-term, coercive violence, which rests on a forcibly subdued indigenous population. The improprieties and gaps in the system that the incidents in the previous section reveal therefore become more threatening in South Africa's fraught context, as they reveal the fragility of the imperial project in South Africa.

As I mentioned earlier, my reading of whether the Post Office functioned as a tool of imperialism is influenced by Arjun Appadurai's theory about the production of locality. Clearly, his historical context and Trollope's were vastly different. However, Appadurai's description of how new localities are produced under different systems of communication speaks to the current investigation into the Post Office's role as an agent, aiding the spread and consolidation of imperial power in South Africa. Indeed, Appadurai identifies the postal system as being one of a collection of civic institutions which participate in the establishment of locality:

Through apparatuses as diverse as museums and village dispensaries, post offices and police stations, tollbooths and telephone booths, the nation-state creates a vast network of formal and informal techniques for the nationalisation of all space considered to be under its sovereign authority (Appadurai, p.189).

³¹⁵ Rowland Hill, *Post Office Reform: Its Importance and Practicability*, (London: Charles Knight and Co., 1837), p. 61.

The network formed by the post office along with other bureaucratic and civic institutions therefore extends the state's hold over subsidiary territories in a similar way to Cleere's conceptualisation of the post office's role. Whilst Cleere acknowledges the pseudo-militaristic appearance of the workers within the British postal system when she remarks upon Trollope's red-coated uniform, Appadurai makes the link between violence and the production of new localities more explicit (Cleere, p.196). He writes:

All locality building has a moment of colonization, a moment both historical and chronotypic, when there is a formal recognition that the production of a neighbourhood requires deliberate, risky, even violent action in respect to the soil, forests, animals, and other human beings. A good deal of the violence associated with foundational ritual [...] is a recognition of the force that is required to wrest a locality from previously uncontrolled people and places (Appadurai, p.183).

In South Africa's colonial context, I shall demonstrate that the postal network played a role in assisting the violent wresting of the land from the indigenous population.

The previous chapter of this thesis contains analysis of an article published in the *Cape Monthly Magazine* which depicts the influence that the arrival and departure of the English mail steamers had on the rhythms of the social calendar of the Cape. I argued that the shared and simultaneous experience of waiting for the ships to arrive, to then read and disseminate the books and letters they contained created a sense of social cohesiveness in the colony. The ritualised waiting for the ships to arrive and then leave functions like the rituals which Appadurai identifies as being an important part of the creation of locality. He argues that ritual is the 'socialisation of space and time [...] the spatiotemporal production of locality' (p.180) As we have seen, the locality-producing ritual of waiting for the mail steamers was incredibly fragile, subject to external influences such as adverse weather conditions and human delays caused by unreliable service. As a result, tremendous importance was attached to the cyclical arrival and departure of the mail steamers. Trollope was also influenced by this locality-producing ritual, and was quick to note the mail steamers' schedule on his arrival in Cape Town, writing to remind Harry in his second letter home that the 'posts leave London for Capetown [sic] every Thursday' and imploring him to 'write often' (*Trollope Letters*, II, p.732). The communicative and connective properties that both Cleere and Appadurai attach to the postal service are therefore of vital importance to both colonists and visitors in the Cape.

The ocean mail post was, by 1877, far more regular than it had been in the 1850's, running weekly from Cape Town to London in a journey that took 26 days (Goldblatt, p.140). Once the mails arrived at Cape Town, they were despatched throughout the colony via the domestic mail network that Trollope made such extensive use of in his travels. It is clear from the three incidents I described earlier in the chapter that the domestic mail service relied on the cooperation of the indigenous African peoples of the area. From the outset of his journey, Trollope was more concerned about the dangers posed by the underdeveloped roads than he was by wild animals or potentially hostile indigenous people (*South Africa*, p.139). Grouped in the same threat category as the animals that Trollope hunted during his journey through Africa, this suggests that Trollope viewed the military suppression of the indigenous people by both the British and the Boers along the colonial frontiers as reasonably successful.³¹⁶

Indeed, rather than being a hindrance to the sureness of the domestic mail system, some indigenous South Africans participated in its functioning by working as drivers and runners. I made a passing reference to the Zulu runners who transported mail between Durban and Newcastle earlier in this chapter, but the quote from *South Africa* requires further attention:

The cart to Newcastle goes but once a week; and though subsidiary mails are carried by Zulu runners twice a week over the whole distance, — 175 miles, — and carried as quickly as by the cart, the heavier bulk, such as newspapers, books, &c., are kept for the mail conveyance (*South Africa*, p.248).

The reference to Zulu runners covering 175 miles on foot, twice a week, and in the same time as a horse-drawn cart seems remarkably casual. This is presumably because the use of mail runners was a well-established custom. For example, Ibn Batūta, a traveller to Hindustan in the middle of the fourteenth century reports that the Sultan used runners to get his dispatches in a timely fashion.³¹⁷ A source more contemporaneous to Trollope also describes the use of mail runners in Japan.³¹⁸ In colonial India, the mail or '*dak*' runners were a familiar feature of colonial life, and their activities

³¹⁶ For a useful summary of the military history of colonial expansionism in South Africa, see chapter 5 of Stapleton, *Military History*.

³¹⁷ Ibn Batūta, *The Travels of Ibn Batūta, Translated from the Abridged Arabic Manuscript Copies, Preserved in the Public Library of Cambridge*, ed. by Samuel Lee, (London: Printed for the Oriental Translation Committee : Sold by J. Murray, 1829), pp. 101 - 102.

³¹⁸ George Francis Train, *Young America Abroad in Europe, Asia, and Australia*, (London: Samuel Low, Son and Co, 1857), p. 47.

were reported on in the British newspapers during the Indian Rebellion of 1857 – 1858.³¹⁹ Trollope's offhand reference to the labourers who sustained South Africa's mail network on foot is therefore contextualised by the imperial precedence of the figure of the indigenous mail runner.

In the South African context, the use of mail runners began with the second British occupation of the Cape Colony in 1806. Farmers along the route between Stellenbosch and Cape Town were paid 5 rix dollars per month to house and feed the so-called 'Hottentot' relay runners (Allis, p.16).³²⁰ There is very little secondary material about these runners specifically, but research on colonial labour relations in the Cape shows that the Khoikhoi had been 'reduced to the level of unfree servants' in a process of subjection which had begun after 1652 when the Dutch formally established Cape Town as a provision station.³²¹ Colonial expansion and land dispossession, wars and skirmishes with high Khoikhoi death rates, animal diseases, and a smallpox epidemic in 1713 had all reduced the prosperity and stability of Khoikhoi society, and they began to enter the colonial economy as workers. There were various entry points into the colonial economy. Some Khoikhoi were taken as prisoners of war during skirmishes with the Dutch and forced to work in agricultural production. Others, expecting monetary remuneration, voluntarily entered the labour force but were only paid in food and lodging. Lastly, the offspring of unions between Khoikhoi people and Dutch-owned slaves were indentured by being apprenticed to the slave owner for twenty five years (Elphick and Malherbe, pp.11 – 32). The Khoikhoi runners, who were the predecessors of the Zulu runners that Trollope would later encounter, were in effect indentured labourers, bound to work as part of the postal service's labour force.³²² The good functioning and reliability of the mail delivery service across the Cape Colony and into Natal was thus based on the displacement and violent repression of

³¹⁹ Chitra Joshi, 'Dak Roads, Dak Runners, and the Reordering of Communication Networks', *International Review of Social History*, 57. 2 (2012), pp. 169 - 189. 'The Mutinies in India', *Times*, 2 September 1857, p. 5.

³²⁰ Eric Rosenthal and Eliezer Blum, *Runner and Mailcoach: Postal History and Stamps of Southern Africa*, (Cape Town: Purnell, 1969), p. 7.

³²¹ Robert Ross, *Beyond the Pale: Essays on the History of Colonial South Africa*, (Johannesburg: Witwatersrand University Press, 1994), p. 180. Richard Elphick and Vertrees Malherbe, 'The Khoisan to 1828', in *The Shaping of South African Society, 1652-1840*, ed. by R. Elphick and H. Giliomee, (Cape Town: Maskew, Miller, and Longman, 1979), pp. 3 - 65.

³²² Again, research on the Zulu runners working for the postal service in South Africa is sketchy. Even the promisingly-titled *Runner and Mailcoach* does not elaborate on how the Zulu runners entered the work force, it merely details how the runners were dressed and what their duties entailed (Rosenthal, pp.21, 23, and 25).

the indigenous people of these two colonies. The initial overt violence of colonial expansion becomes transmuted into long-term coercive violence in the context of Khoikhoi and Zulu employment in the South African postal system, which contradicts Cleere's conceptualisation of the postal service as a benevolent, non-violent expression of imperial might.

It is therefore clear that the operational success of the postal system in South Africa relied upon a pliant indigenous population – both to allow the mail carts to travel through their land without being harassed, and to work as drivers and runners. Underlying the sureness and reliability of the mail coaches were the colonial roads, which as the previous sections have shown ranged from highly-skilled feats of engineering, to pot-holed and rocky strips of bare earth. Like the operational aspects of the mail service, the structural framework of the network also relied upon a compliant indigenous workforce. In the Cape, the spectacular mountain passes that Trollope admired so much were built using local convict labour:

The convicts are chiefly coloured people [...] The ordinary Hottentot with his daily pound of mutton, properly cooked in a first-class kitchen and nothing but convict labour to do, would probably find himself very comfortable (*South Africa*, p.132 – 133).³²³

Trollope seems to view this kind of forced labour as a satisfyingly productive endeavour, where the Khoikhoi people who had transgressed the colonial laws were well-fed and engaged in work which did not seem too strenuous in his eyes. Trollope had expressed similar sentiments when he was in Freemantle in Australia. There he wrote that convict labour was a 'gentle' punishment because of the good food, generous tobacco provisions, and low incidence of harsh floggings (*Australia*, II, p.114). In South Africa, Trollope notes that the convicts are similarly well-treated. Indeed, Trollope disapprovingly records how 'costly' penal labour is because of the expenses incurred in housing and feeding the workers (*South Africa*, p.132). However, despite the convicts' apparently agreeable conditions in South Africa, their 'comfortable' labour conditions were nevertheless founded on coercion. Like the operational aspects of the mail system, the structural surety of the South African postal system was reliant on unfree labour.

³²³ Trollope here uses the words 'coloured' and 'hottentot' interchangeably, as he had been told that much intermingling between the races had taken place in the Cape Colony (*South Africa*, p.132).

However, while it was seemingly acceptable to use forced penal labour on the roads in the Cape, Trollope was discomforted by the use of Zulu labour to construct roads and work as mail runners in Natal. Here he regretted the fact that ‘the Zulu, whom the white man will not call a slave, is compelled through the influence of his Chief to do the work which the white man requires from him’ (*South Africa*, p.238). This system of labour, known as *isibhalo* or forced labour, was introduced by the Natal government in 1848, and compelled the local Chiefs to provide labour for public works in the colony at the rate of one worker for every 11 huts in their chiefdom.³²⁴ *Isibhalo* labour was unpopular amongst the African population, as it undermined the relationship between the Chiefs and their people, and created tension between the Chiefs and the colonial government when they struggled to meet their quotas (Lambert, p.279 – 280). Whilst he may not have been aware of the political intricacies of *isibhalo* labour, Trollope nevertheless suggests that ‘outraged philanthropists’ would be uncomfortable with the ‘compulsory’ nature of the road building work taking place in Natal, despite the fact that the labourers were paid 15 shillings per month (*South Africa*, p.238). Trollope avoids admitting whether he falls into this philanthropic category, although he does remind humanitarians at home that ‘the very civilization which he is anxious to carry among the savage races cannot be promulgated without something of tyranny, – some touch of apparent injustice’ (p.239). Once again, the sureness and reliability of South Africa’s postal system is racially coded, as the roads that are so integral to the functioning of the mail delivery system are reliant on a forcibly compelled African population. Indeed, it would appear that the ideally ‘sure’ colonial bureaucratic system in South Africa rested on the containment of African people within the circuits and networks of communication in the postal service.

Mark Ravinder Frost’s examination of postal practices in Asia notes that the technologies of Empire, such as steam-shipping and the telegraph (and by implication the postal service), have been read by many critics as ‘state-led advances’, by which the British Empire could extend and consolidate its hold on its overseas territories. He adds nuance to this conceptualisation by arguing that ‘closer

³²⁴ John Lambert, ‘Chiefship in Early Colonial Natal, 1843–1879’, *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 21. 2 (1995), pp. 269-285 (p. 279).

inspection reveals that such tools were as much instruments of global capitalism and a revolutionary new information order as they were means of imperial coercion'. He suggests that commercial concerns often preceded those of military expansionism when it came to the introduction and development of communication technologies (Frost, p.67). While commercial concerns undeniably assisted the expansion of the postal system in South Africa, it is important not to underestimate how integral it was to the defence and domination of the British Empire's acquisitions in South Africa. As a 'technology of interactivity', the postal system in South Africa strengthened ties between the colony and the metropole, and also assisted in the production of a British sense of locality in the territory. However, the production of British localities in South Africa was preceded by colonisation, in which the British 'wrest a locality from previously uncontrolled people or places' (Appadurai, p.183). The postal system in South Africa contained these 'previously uncontrolled' people within its structural and operational circuits. The indigenous labour that built the roads, drove the mail carts, and ran the posts on foot were often coerced into working for the postal system, and as a result, the sureness and reliability of the system, which Trollope found so commendable, can be seen to have rested upon a violently subdued population. Interpersonal contact between colonists and indigenous Africans reveal the exercise of imperial violence and power. Eileen Cleere's of the imperial postal service as a non-violent exercise in colonial expansion is therefore not applicable to the South African context, as viewed through Anthony Trollope's *South Africa*.

***An Old Man's Love* (1884) and the dangers of white belonging in Africa**

The final section of this chapter investigates the influence that Trollope's journey through South Africa had on his fiction and assesses whether, and to what extent, the themes and issues that the previous sections extrapolated from *South Africa* are also found in his fiction. *An Old Man's Love* (1884) is Trollope's only novel that contains references to his trip to South Africa, and at times he

even transposes passages almost verbatim from *South Africa* into his fictional narrative.³²⁵ It tells the tale of Mary Lawrie, who having been orphaned, is saved the fate of becoming a governess by a friend of her father's, William Whittlestaff, who takes her on as his ward.³²⁶ The 'old man' of the tale, Mr Whittlestaff lives alone with his outspoken housekeeper Mrs Baggett in Croker Hall. After Mary moves to Croker Hall, Mr Whittlestaff begins to fall in love with her, which culminates in a proposal of marriage (*Old Man*, I, pp.58 – 62). Before Mary accepts, she tells Mr Whittlestaff that she had been in love with an Oxford student, John Gordon, but three years previously her step-mother had sent him away because he was poor. As Mary had not heard from him since, Mr Whittlestaff persuades her that he is dead and she accepts his hand in marriage (pp.65 – 91). However, the next day John Gordon arrives at Croker Hall, having made his fortune at the diamond fields in Kimberly and traced Mary to Mr Whittlestaff's house (pp.105 – 109). Thereafter a battle for Mary's love commences, between the older, genteel Mr Whittlestaff and the younger John Gordon. Eventually Mr Whittlestaff relinquishes his claim on Mary, and she and John are able to marry.³²⁷ Mr Whittlestaff's decision about whether to break his engagement with Mary hinges on his own fear of rejection, and also on his suspicions about John Gordon's gentility. In this novel, the diamond mines in Kimberley are presented as a moral testing ground, where young Englishmen either make their fortunes, or are subsumed by their corrupting influence. The themes of Trollope's travel writing are also present: the dangers of contact between people in South African systems; the importance of steady progress to the development of colonial gentility; the moral dangers of sudden riches; the threat posed by gaps in

³²⁵ J.H. Davidson argues that Trollope's dystopian novel, *The Fixed Period* (1882) contains numerous oblique references to Trollope's experiences in South Africa, and interprets the book as an 'apologia for the annexation of the Transvaal' (Davidson, 'Colonies' p.326 – 329). His argument is based on the fact that the novel was written during the Transvaal War (1880 – 1881) and that the main character in the book resembles the former President of the Transvaal, Thomas Burgers (p.327). I find Davidson's argument tenuous, and suggest that rather than being a reaction to the annexation of the Transvaal, *The Fixed Period* is symptomatic of Trollope's disillusionment with imperial expansionism in general. Indeed, more recent research has suggested stronger links between *The Fixed Period* and the text of *Australia and New Zealand* than *South Africa*. (Dominic Alessio, 'A Conservative Utopia? Anthony Trollope's *The Fixed Period* (1882)', *Journal of New Zealand Literature*, 22. (2004), pp. 73 - 94; Helen Lucy Blythe, 'The Fixed Period (1882): Euthanasia, Cannibalism, and Colonial Extinction in Trollope's Antipodes', *Nineteenth-Century Contexts: An Interdisciplinary Journal*, 25. 2 (2003), pp. 161 - 180.)

³²⁶ Anthony Trollope, *An Old Man's Love*, 2 vols (Edinburgh; London: William Blackwood and Sons, 1884), I, p. 2.

³²⁷ Anthony Trollope, *An Old Man's Love*, 2 vols (Edinburgh; London: William Blackwood and Sons, 1884), II, p. 167.

the system and colonial race relations are all re-examined in this, the only fictional work that directly harvested and reworked material from Trollope's *South Africa*.

John Gordon's gentility, or lack thereof, is one of the major criteria that Mr Whittlestaff bases his life-making decision on. The reader is first introduced to Gordon through Mary's eyes, after he arrives at Croker Hall. She immediately decides that Gordon is the same man who left her three years ago, only better dressed with a 'look of prosperity' about him (*Old Man*, I, p.109). The narrator then fills the reader in on Gordon's history since he left England – he had gone to work at the diamond mines in Kimberley for two years. Kimberley's role as a setting of moral testing is made overt: 'If there is a place on God's earth where a man can thoroughly make or mar himself within that space of time, it is the town of Kimberley' (p.113). In *South Africa* Trollope described Kimberley thus:

[...] the place itself was distasteful to me in the extreme. When I was there the heat was very great, the thermometer registering 160 in the sun, and 97 in the shade [...] Perhaps having been in such personal discomfort, I am not a fair judge of the place. But an atmosphere composed of dust and flies cannot be pleasant, — of dust so thick that the sufferer fears to remove it lest the raising of it may aggravate the evil, and of flies so numerous that one hardly dares to slaughter them by the ordinary means lest their dead bodies should be noisome [...] the meat was bad, the butter uneatable, vegetables a rarity [...] I do not think that there is a tree to be seen within five miles of the town. When I was there I doubt whether there was a blade of grass within twenty miles, unless what might be found on the very marge of the low water of the Vaal river (*South Africa*, pp.370 – 371).

In *An Old Man's Love*, Kimberley remains much the same:

I know no spot more odious in every way to a man who has learned to love the ordinary modes of English life. It is foul with dust and flies; it reeks with bad brandy; it is fed upon potted meats; it has not a tree near it. It is inhabited in part by tribes of South African niggers, who have lost all the picturesqueness of niggerdom in working for the white man's wages. The white man himself is insolent, ill-dressed, and ugly. The weather is very hot, and from morning till night there is no occupation other than that of looking for diamonds, and the works attending it [...] diamond-searching is the occupation of the place; and if a man be sharp and clever, and able to guard what he gets, he will make a fortune there in two years more readily perhaps than elsewhere. John Gordon had gone out to Kimberley, and had returned the owner of many shares in many mines (*Old Man*, I, pp.113 – 114).

Kimberley is unattractive, malodourous, and dirty, and this physical and moral taint is transplanted on to the men of both races who work there. Although we are led to believe that Gordon must be 'sharp and clever' to have accumulated a fortune there, there is also the possibility that he may have been one of the 'insolent, ill-dressed and ugly' population. Trollope's narrative voice paints an unattractive picture of the mining town of Kimberley and its inhabitants, and suggests that white settlement in South Africa can have a degenerative effect on British colonists.

John Gordon is at risk of being contaminated by his association not only with Kimberley, but with the diamonds that he comes into contact with in the mines. The earlier sections of this chapter have outlined Trollope's negative attitude toward diamonds, and mining in general. In *An Old Man's Love* Trollope airs his prejudices through Mrs Baggett and Mr Whittlestaff. After a conversation with Mrs Baggett, in which she suggests that Gordon's diamonds are in fact "rubbish and paste", Mr Whittlestaff thinks to himself that 'diamonds as a source of income are volatile' and not as reliable as 'funds' (*Old Man*, I, p.191 and p.199). During a heated conversation with Gordon, Mr Whittlestaff makes his concerns about diamonds even more explicit, describing his fortune as a result of "groping in the dirt". He worries that if Mary marries Gordon, she would also end up in the diamond fields, grovelling in "mud and slime" (*Old Man*, II, p.159 and p.163). When John Gordon asks why Mr Whittlestaff continues to reproach his association with diamonds, despite having been told that they are to be sold to raise funds for himself and Mary, Mr Whittlestaff responds by saying:

"These things stick to the very soul of a man. They are a poison of which he cannot rid himself. They are like gambling. They make everything cheap that should be dear, and everything dear that should be cheap. I trust them not at all, – and I do not trust you because you deal in them" (pp.165 – 166).

Diamonds themselves have become like the mud, dirt and slime that they are often found in, and they stick to the miners and taint them with both moral and physical degradation. Despite being educated at Oxford and coming home from the diamond fields with a fortune, John Gordon's gentility is at risk because of the manner in which his fortune was acquired.

Trollope further emphasises the moral risks associated with diamond mining, by introducing Mr Fitzwalker Tookey, John Gordon's co-owner of the Stick-in-the-Mud claim. The name of the mining claim is of course a play on words, suggesting the contaminating influence of muddy diamonds, but also implying a lack of progression and an inability to change. The figure of recession or degeneration associated with the mining claim is Mr Tookey, a London lawyer who had gone to Kimberley and begun to mine diamonds:

Diamonds had become more to him than either briefs or pleadings. He had been there for fifteen years, and had ruined himself and made himself half-a-dozen times. He had found diamonds to be more pleasant than law, and to be more compatible with champagne, tinned lobsters, and young ladies. He had married a wife, and had parted with her, and taken another man's wife, and paid for her with diamonds (*Old Man*, II, p.94).

Despite his rough and ready living conditions, Tookey is described as having the ‘antecedents and education of a gentleman’, although these have become worn through too much champagne, too many ‘bloated’ ladies and a tendency to beat his wife. Nevertheless, he retained some of the ‘vestiges of the Temple’ and Gordon had come to appreciate his company in Kimberley (p.98 and p.107). However, the narrator subtly informs the reader that Tookey is not Gordon’s equal, by describing Gordon as a ‘steady man’ in need of companionship, and finding himself ‘thrown together’ with Tookey through their joint ownership in the diamond claim (p.97). Gordon also chastises Tookey for getting drunk, abusing his wife, and neglecting his three children (p.114). Unlike Tookey who has become fixated on diamonds for the women, lobster and champagne that he can buy with them, Gordon went to Kimberley solely to earn enough money to make himself worthy of Mary (*Old Man*, I, p.115). Thus, while Tookey may have a gentlemanly background, it is Gordon who behaves in a gentlemanly manner, despite the temptations on offer in Kimberley.

Gordon’s ability to resist the lure of diamonds is impressive, as the previous sections have demonstrated how diamond-lust affected all of the miners, regardless of race. It is curious that African people, who were so numerous as to be a constant presence in *South Africa* are almost absent from *An Old Man’s Love*. While Trollope was impressed with the scale of the indigenous work force and on the mines, and lauded the ‘civilising’ effects that mining had on the African people in his travel narrative, in his fictional representation of Kimberley Trollope makes only two mentions of African labour. The first occasion is in one of the above quotes, reproduced here for ease of reference: ‘It is inhabited in part by tribes of South African niggers, who have lost all the picturesqueness of niggerdom in working for the white man’s wages’ (*Old Man*, I, p.113). Work in the mines has moulded the African people from visually appealing and morally untarnished ‘noble savages’ into economically productive labourers.³²⁸ However, African labour also poses challenges to the British mining systems and procedures, as John Gordon explains: “‘The diamond is generally washed out of the mud by some nigger, and we have to look very sharp after him to see that he

³²⁸ For more on the figure of the noble savage, see Ter Ellingson, *The Myth of the Noble Savage*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001). See also Chapter 1’s discussion of the ‘noble savage’ in the context of ethnographic displays.

doesn't hide it under his toe-nails” (*Old Man*, II, p.40). This echoes Trollope’s observations at the diamond mines in Kimberley in *South Africa*:

The opportunities for stealing are of hourly occurrence and are of such a nature as to make prevention impossible. These men are sharp-sighted [sic] as birds and know and see a diamond much quicker than a white man. They will pick up stones with their toes and secrete them even under the eyes of those who are watching them. I was told that a man will so hide a diamond in his mouth that no examination will force him to disclose it (*South Africa*, p.365).

In Trollope’s travel narrative as well as in his fiction, the gaps in the British-imposed systems of mining production are racially coded, and African labour, whilst essential to make the mines profitable, also put those profits at risk by secreting the diamonds in and around their bodies. Once again, diamonds are shown to have a debasing and contaminating effect and the people who mine them.

If both African miners and their British managers become rapaciously interested in diamonds to their moral and physical detriment, the reader of *An Old Man’s Love* begins to wonder how John Gordon can ignore the lure of diamond fever. Trollope gives us his first hint by describing the nature of Gordon’s association with the mines:

[...] he had worked on, buying and selling shares in the mines, owning a quarter of an eighth there, and half a tenth there, and then advancing until he was the possessor of many complete shares in many various adventures which were quite intelligible to him, though to the ordinary stay-at-home-Englishmen they seem to be so full of peril as not to be worth possessing (*Old Man*, I, pp.115 – 116).

Although he is potentially contaminated by his association with Kimberley, Trollope elevates Gordon from the rest of the white miners by removing him from direct contact with the diamonds and making him a speculator. By prudently buying and selling shares in the mines, and steadily increasing his portfolio, Gordon has managed to lessen the risks associated with his mining ‘adventures’ and has come to a level somewhat higher than the managerial position that Trollope recommended for white men in the mining sector in *South Africa* (p.337). Although the contrary Mrs Baggett argues that “He ain’t no better than an ordinary miner. Coals and diamonds is all one to me [...]”, the reader is made aware that John Gordon is not an ordinary miner, as he has accumulated his wealth without having to grovel in the dirt, and has managed to keep his moral character intact. (p.30). However, although Mr Whittlestaff eventually and reluctantly grants Gordon with enough gentility to marry Mary, the mines in Kimberley remain a place of contamination, as Gordon persuades Whittlestaff not to go to

Kimberley himself because he is a 'gentleman' (p.176). This seems to suggest that the colonial man, who has made his fortune in the mines, can only truly become a gentleman when he is at some distance from them. Lack of direct contact with the diamonds alone is not sufficient for the attainment of gentlemanly status, it is only by leaving the colony itself that a man, in possession of a fortune, a good education and a strong moral character can become a gentleman. Thus while the colonies may be a testing ground in which a man can prove his gentility, it is only in the metropole that that gentility can be awarded.

An Old Man's Love is a meditation on gentility, and whether it is possible for English men to return from the colonies untainted by their ungentlemanly pursuits. Whilst Kimberley is presented as a place of trial and testing, where grubbing in the dirt for diamonds degrades miners both physically and morally, it is also a site of rejuvenation for those like John Gordon, who go there with honest goals and conduct themselves prudently. This slow and steady progression toward social advancement is a reworking of what Henderson identifies as Trollope's 'gentleman professional', and Gordon becomes a good colonist and later a gentleman once he leaves the diamond fields and returns to England. In essence, the precarious nature of British settler identity in South Africa can be reversed by returning to the metropole.

Conclusion

Upon Trollope's return to England from South Africa, John Blackwood welcomed him back:

I am extremely glad to hear that you have got safe back again and I hope you are all the better for your expedition altho some of your experiences must have been rather rough. No one however can rough it better than our Mail clad Anthony (*Trollope Letters*, II, p.749).

Blackwood's pun on Trollope's letter-armour is a final reminder that Trollope's investigations of life in South Africa and his influence upon the people there, both as a travel writer and a high-ranking postal official, were made possible by the colonial postal service. The repetition of the word 'rough' is an echo of Trollope's descriptions of the unsophisticated yet reliable mail carts which were his main mode of transport through the colony. Trollope's focus on the rudimentary nature of the South African transportation and communication networks reveals his interest in the inner workings of the

colony, and the systems which keep it running, ordered, and connected to the rest of the empire. However, the mail and luggage-based episodes that this chapter considered in detail demonstrate how fragile these circuits were – open to abuse from bold and brazen colonists and the employees of the postal network who were supposed to maintain the system.

By exposing colonial circuits to misuse, the colonists put the success of the imperial project in South Africa in jeopardy. As a technology of interaction, the postal service was an integral actor in the rituals and processes which aided the production of British locality in a colony which was not English enough for Trollope's standards. The postal service formed a connective network between the 'Mother Country' and her colonists who were spread out over the territory, as well as a circuit of information and news amongst the colonists themselves (*South Africa*, p.39). The socially-cohesive properties of the communication network were heightened by giving the colonists shared experiences – such as dreading travelling by post cart, or waiting for the mails to arrive. The locality-production properties of the postal service were essential in South Africa, both to counteract the threat posed to the empire by its size and diffuse nature, and to consolidate British power in the colony.

Trollope observed that British power in South Africa was at risk from all three of the groups of people living there. The super-numerous indigenous African people had been violently subjugated by the Dutch and the British, but were by no means conquered – the Anglo-Zulu War which broke out two years after Trollope's visit was evidence of that. They were controlled and contained by becoming employees within British systems and infrastructure, and Trollope lauded the 'civilising' properties of work, commerce and commercialism upon the indigenous people. However, this chapter has demonstrated that the indigenous African peoples' entry into the colonial labour market was not always voluntary, as forced and 'unfree' labour was a frequent practice. As a result, the sureness of the system that Trollope found so commendable becomes unsettling and threatening, as it was founded on long-term coercive violence and subjection.

In addition to containing the African people within British systems of control and order, Trollope also advocated enveloping the Dutch under the broad racial category of 'English', provided that they worked toward common goals and expressed allegiance to the British flag. However, the rural Dutch Boers put British colonialism under pressure, for as much as they aided colonial

expansion by opening up the interior of the country in their attempts to escape British rule, they tied up the land in their large unproductive farms and resisted British domination. Trollope's solution was once again to contain the errant people within British systems of land re-distribution.

Finally, the colonial English posed a threat to the success of the British settlement project in South Africa because of their susceptibility to the risks that colonial life posed. In both his travel writing and fiction, Trollope presents South Africa as a moral testing ground, where the English worker either succeeds by being a conscientious, prudent, and hard worker, or sinks below the level of the African races because of laziness, greed and arrogance. Of particular concern was the employment of white labour in the mines. In contrast to the civilising properties that Trollope attributed to African labour on the diamond mines, white employment in grubbing and grovelling in the dirt for diamonds threatened both moral and physical degradation. However, this contamination could be weakened if the British abroad worked in managerial roles, where they are able to exercise their intelligence and progress their careers upon a steady trajectory. The 'gentleman professional', as exemplified by Trollope himself, aided the spread of British authority across her territories, thereby promoting social cohesion and lessening the dangers posed to the empire by its diffuse and extended nature.

However, as the analysis of *An Old Man's Love* demonstrated, gentility can only be recovered once the colonial traveller has returned to the metropole. Once there, the stains attached to his character by participating in demeaning activities can be removed, provided that the motivation for visiting the colonies was pure in the first place. This suggests that for Trollope, colonial belonging is based on temporariness, and that if a settler wanted to preserve their civility and civilisation, they needed to curtail their time in Britain's overseas territories. In *South Africa*, Trollope envisaged colonial Englishness through an Anglo-Saxon framework, and permitted people of non-English descent to be assimilated into the national category, provided they worked toward common British aims, under the banner of the 'English flag'. However, his fiction reveals his subconscious belief that English men are only truly English at home, in England. Colonial bodies, which come under so much assault in South Africa from large fish, dirt, and diamond slime, lose their gentility to such an extent that it can only be restored in England.

Conclusion

This thesis opened with an examination of the two contexts in which it is imbedded – the historical and the present. Using critical whiteness studies, I registered my concern that a study of the struggle for white belonging in South Africa risks confirming and validating white intellectual hegemony in the academy. The ethical implications of my research into South Africa's colonial history have always been uppermost in my mind. This has felt particularly pressing when presenting my work to my peers at the University of the Witwatersrand in Johannesburg (Wits), because the current political context in South Africa has been characterised by increasing levels of student activism and calls for transformation. The photograph below was taken during a visit to Wits in October 2015, at a time when students were protesting about what they perceived to be the University's exploitative use of outsourced support staff.³²⁹



Figure 1 – 'Decolonise knowledge'. Wits. 6 October 2015.

³²⁹ For more on this protest, see the following news report: Bongani Nkosi, 'Huge Protest Decries Wits's Outsourcing Practice', *Mail and Guardian*, 06 Oct 2015, <<http://mg.co.za/article/2015-10-06-huge-protest-decries-witss-outsourcing-practice>> [accessed 10 October 2015].

This demonstration followed on from the 'Rhodes Must Fall' campaign at the University of Cape Town, the 'Open Stellenbosch' movement at the University of Stellenbosch, and a discussion at Rhodes University in the Eastern Cape about whether to change the name of the institution into one with less contentious connotations.³³⁰

These recent strenuous appeals to 'decolonise knowledge' have resulted in some thought-provoking critical interventions. Achille Mbembe presented a paper at the Wits Institute for Social and Economic Research (WISER) in May 2015 in which he considered how knowledge decolonisation could be implemented in a South African context.³³¹ He suggested a two-stage process:

The first is a critique of the dominant Eurocentric academic model – the fight against what Latin Americans in particular call “epistemic coloniality”, that is, the endless production of theories that are based on European traditions; are produced nearly always by Europeans or Euro-American men who are the only ones accepted as capable of reaching universality; a particular anthropological knowledge, which is a process of knowing about Others – but a process that never fully acknowledges these Others as thinking and knowledge-producing subjects.

The second is an attempt at imagining what the alternative to this model could look like (p.18).

The links that Mbembe and other South African academics make between power, knowledge, and culture clearly have a long history. My contribution to this discussion has been to uncover the complexity of the processes of colonisation and knowledge production in an early stage of South Africa's modern history.

I began this thesis with the intention of understanding the function of English literature in the mid-nineteenth-century history of the Cape Colony as a study of book history. However, what this project's entanglement with its current and past contexts has revealed is a deep set of concerns about

³³⁰ For more information about the transformation campaigns mentioned above, see the webpages at the end of this footnote. These protests culminated in a nation-wide student protest about a proposed increase in University fees. The so-called 'Fees Must Fall' campaign mobilised students to march to Parliament in Cape Town, and the Union Buildings in Pretoria at the end of October 2015. As a result of their actions, the Government of South Africa met their demand for a zero per cent fee increase. For a reflection on the protests, written by Xolela Mangcu, the head of Sociology at the University of Cape Town, please see Xolela Mangcu, '#Feesmustfall: Somewhere between the Barricades and a Book Shop', *Rand Daily Mail*, 02 November 2015, <<http://www.rdm.co.za/politics/2015/11/02/feesmustfall-somewhere-between-the-barricades-and-a-book-shop>> [accessed 20 December 2015]. ('Rhodes Must Fall Campaign Website', <<http://rhodesmustfall.co.za/>> [accessed 6 June 2015]; 'Open Stellenbosch Facebook Page', <<https://www.facebook.com/openstellenbosch/>> [accessed 6 June 2015].)

³³¹ A PDF copy of his talk is available at Achille Mbembe, 'Decolonizing Knowledge and the Question of the Archive', *Wits Institute for Social and Economic Research (WISER) blog*, <<http://wiser.wits.ac.za/content/ebook-decolonizing-knowledge-and-question-archive-12074>> [accessed 30 December 2015].

race which appear to be active at every level of the culture that I have investigated. My research has shown the importance of the infrastructure of institutions to support the production, dissemination and consumption of literature. The nineteenth-century history of the institutions of literary colonialism – the library, the periodical press and the postal service – reveals that they were intended to be an expression of British imperial dominance and control over the pre-established Dutch and African populations in South Africa. They were envisaged as physical and bureaucratic manifestations of British colonial advancement and self-confidence. However, a closer look at how they operated reveals that they were far more unstable and conflict-ridden than they seemed.

The present study's engagement with the cultural products of England and South Africa exposes the precarious nature of the cultural project of colonisation. Framed by Raymond Williams's and Edward Said's work on the important role that culture plays in society, I suggest that the cultural means of colonisation in the Cape were important, because they supported and strengthened the processes which imposed British power and control upon the colony. This thesis analyses the cultural aspects of these processes, but what emerges is much more ambiguous and equivocal than the British colonists may have hoped for. Literature was envisaged as a stabilising influence by providing the colonists with cultural and intellectual links to England. The 'right' kind of literature was also deemed to have a civilising function, elevating the colonists' intellectual abilities, and shaping their moral development. However, this thesis has argued that literature was also destabilising, serving as a reminder of the colonists' geographical displacement from England, and alienating, due to the dislocation between the content of the books, and the setting in which they were read.

Thinking about the Cape's emergent literary culture has exposed the colonists' competing and entangled desires to retain close ties to metropolitan culture, but to also dictate their own terms of self-expression. The tension between these conflicting and contradictory impulses provided the impetus which drove the development of the Cape's colonial literary culture. Periodicals such as the *Cape Monthly Magazine* attempted on the one hand to establish an indigenous white literary culture, and on the other to retain a close connection with the literary, social and intellectual developments taking place in England. England was figured as 'home' within the pages of the *Cape Monthly Magazine*,

but there is a concurrent nagging sense that home is geographically distant, and advancing toward modernity at a pace that the colonists could not keep up with.

This thesis concludes by returning to ‘Amy of Eland Grove’, the short story with which it opened. In the introduction to the story, the narrator describes the setting in which the plot would unfold, noting the physical features of the landscape that he and Amy explored as children. In a footnote, he explains why the area that his father’s house was situated in was called Bushman’s Bay:

The visitor to ‘Bain’s Kloof’, one of the wonders of South Africa, will be amply repaid the trouble of exploring the remarkable caves [...] which exist about the middle of the pass, at a place called ‘Wolvekloof’, the most savage part of the road. These ruins are situated on the right side of the Witte River, in the krantz of a steep and dizzy precipice. The drawings on the blackened walls are curious representations of wild animals, most of which are now rare or totally extinct in the vicinity, and of the diminutive Bushman figure in hunting attire and attitude. They are executed in red clay, mixed with some glutinous matter, which appears to defy the defacing effects of time. The caves are now in the peaceable possession of large colonies of rock rabbits (‘Amy’, p.92).

I find this description striking for three reasons. The first is the name of the river which is used as a landmark to find the caves: Witte, meaning white, which is suggestive of the white settler population which forced the San people off their land. The second is the fact that the caves have been subject to two colonisations since they were first painted, firstly by the invading European settler populations, and more recently by ‘colonies’ of Cape hyraxes (small, guinea-pig-like mammals which live in the mountainous and rocky areas of South Africa). Lastly, it is poignant that the San people have been relegated to the physical margins of the page on which ‘Amy of Eland Grove’ is printed, which replicates their dispossession of, and alienation from, the landscape to which they belong.

This footnoted description of abandoned indigenous art allegorises the literal and figurative pushing of indigenous African culture to the margins of white British knowledge and cultural products. However, despite having been relegated to the edges of the page, their presence has not been removed. The San people’s existence in the narrative of ‘Amy of Eland Grove’ reminds colonial readers that despite their emulation of metropolitan literary practices, South African literature and culture could not be abstracted from their place of production in the same way we saw that George Eliot’s novels could be in Chapter Two of this thesis. White English settler belonging, as expressed through colonial literary and cultural products, is situated firmly within the African context, despite the colonists’ best efforts to mimic British metropolitan culture. It is modestly hoped that this thesis will participate in reclaiming the centrality of the African context to the study of book history in

colonial South Africa, by exposing fragility and uncertainties attendant to white belonging in the Cape Colony in the mid-nineteenth century.

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